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OPINION METER

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level of confidence in
the ability of the
CNMI economy to
recover within the
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INSIDE



Cutbacks

Diabetics are risking life and limb by cutting back on medicines due to the recession.

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Riot Police

Thai soldiers sprayed gunfire into the air and threw tear gas to clear protesters in the capital.

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Pritzker Winner
Peter Zumthor, a Swiss architect, has won the 2009 Pritzker Architecture Prize.

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Dollars spent on NMI lobbying decreases. **PAGE 3**
GAO: Guam infrastructure not ready for buildup. **PAGE 6**

Fund's unfunded liability at \$584M

Drawdown at \$25.3M in first six months of Fiscal Year '09

By HAIDEE V. EUGENIO
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REPORTER

Latest data shows that the NMI Retirement Fund's unfunded liability has ballooned to \$584 million, mainly because of the local government's unpaid contributions to the pension system.

This means for every dollar that the NMI Retirement Fund owes beneficiaries, only 34 cents is funded and 66 cents is unfunded.

The Fitial administration, however, is

not the only one to blame for the financial crisis of the pension system, according to Fund board of trustees chair Juan T. Guerrero, but also the Legislature,

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HAIDEE V. EUGENIO

NMI Retirement Fund board of trustees chair Juan T. Guerrero, center, addresses the trustees during yesterday's board meeting on Capitol Hill. In the meeting, the Fund said it's not only the administration that is to blame for the financial crises faced by the pension system but also the Legislature, which has been micro-managing the Retirement Fund.

DHS: 42 IRs undergo green card interviews

By MONETH G. DEPOSA
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REPORTER

The Department of Homeland Security's U.S. Citizenship and Immigration Services office on Saipan has seen approximately 660 individuals since it opened last month.

These individuals raised questions about their status and made InfoPass appointments to field representatives on island, according to USCIS regional media manager Marie Thérèse Sebrechts.

"To date our U.S. Citizenship and Immigration Services office in Saipan

See **DHS** on Page 4

A dead snake was fished out of the water of the Rota harbor two Saturdays ago after it fell from a cargo of rebar that was being unloaded from a ship that had just arrived from Guam.

According to a statement issued yes-

terday by the Division of Fish and Wildlife, the find was confirmed as a brown tree snake (*Boiga irregularis*) that is about 44 inches in total length.

"It is my best estimate that the animal

See **DEAD** on Page 4

Triple J to open Super Fresh Market

By HAIDEE V. EUGENIO
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REPORTER

Just weeks after acquiring majority ownership of the famous Tony Roma's and Capricciosa restaurants in Garapan, Triple J Saipan Inc. will open a new store called Super Fresh Market on Friday.

Super Fresh Market is at the former location of Carmen Safeway in Chalan Kanoa.

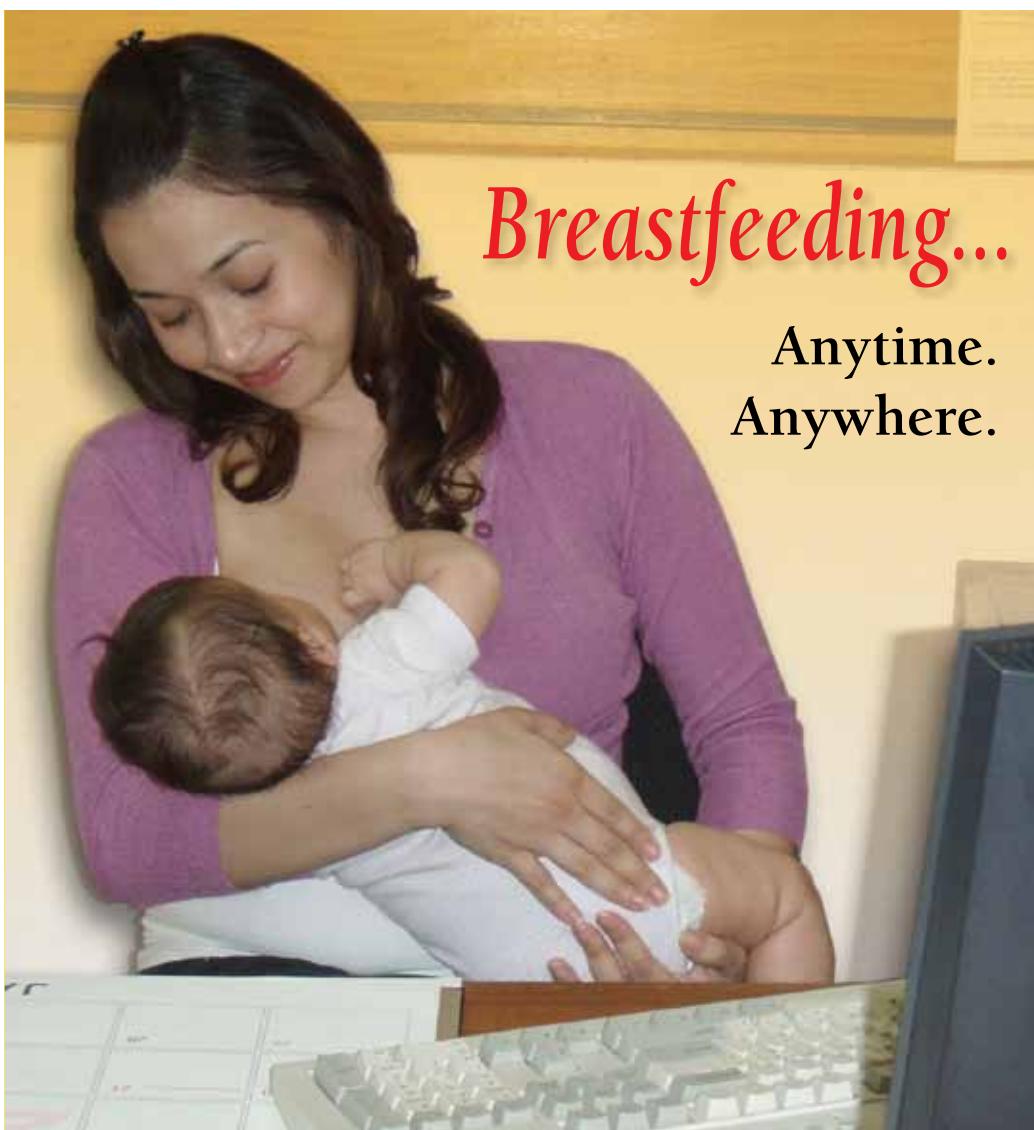
Robert H. Jones, president and chief

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Workers prepare to put up the main signage on the front wall of the new Super Fresh Market, at the former location of Carmen Safeway, in Chalan Kanoa. The new store, owned by Triple J Saipan Inc., will open to the public on Friday, starting at 7am but a VIP night will be held on Thursday, from 6pm to 8pm.

HAIDEE V. EUGENIO



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Local

'Villagomez made follow-ups on \$120K contract'

By FERDIE DE LA TORR
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REPORTER

A former Commonwealth Utilities Corp. employee testified yesterday that Lt. Gov. Timothy P. Villagomez contacted her several times to follow up on a \$120,000 CUC contract that she prepared for CUC and Joaquina V. Santos' Blue Pacific.

This developed as a CUC trade specialist said yesterday that he requested the purchase of 10 drums of the chemical called Rydlyme without instructions from Villagomez, James Santos, or from any other person.

In the ongoing jury trial of Villagomez, James A. Santos, and Joaquina V. Santos in federal court, the U.S. government called to the witness stand former CUC administrative support specialist Charlene Mendiola Tenorio, CUC trade specialist David S. Cabrera, and CUC budget and fiscal officer Bettina G. Terlaje.

During direct examination by assistant U.S. attorney Eric O'Malley, Tenorio said she received in 2007 a quotation from Joaquina Santos of Blue Pacific for Rydlyme. She recognized a document as a fax confirmation dated Oct. 26, 2007, that CUC was in need of 60 drums of Rydlyme.

After receiving the quotation, she said she prepared the \$120,000 contract and that a notice to proceed with the contract was signed by then CUC executive director Anthony Guerrero.

When asked if there was com-

munication between her and Villagomez relating to the contract, Tenorio said Villagomez called her less than five times and texted her once or twice to follow up on the status of the contract. She said, though, that the lieutenant governor did not call her about the payment.

Tenorio said Joaquina Santos also called her to inquire about the status of the contract, just like any other vendor.



Tenorio admitted that she is related to Villagomez and his sister Joaquina Santos. Tenorio's husband is cousin of Villagomez and Joaquina Santos.

Asked if she had a choice when she executed the contract, Tenorio replied, "No," as it was Anthony Guerrero who instructed her to prepare the contract.

Own decision

During direct examination by O'Malley, Cabrera admitted requesting Rydlyme in September 2007 because at the time almost all engines in the power plant needed overhauling.

Cabrera said it was his decision to make the requisition to purchase 10 drums at 55-gallon each of Rydlyme, for a total of 550 gallons.

Shown a document requesting for an emergency purchase of 20 drums, Cabrera said his request was for 10 drums only and that he never stated it was for an emergency.

"I didn't think at the time it was emergency. I thought it was a necessity," the witness said.

Cabrera said he was among

the CUC staff who were sent on a weeklong training on Rydlyme to Apex Engineering Products, the manufacturer of the chemical, in Illinois.

During cross-examination, David J. Lujan, counsel for Villagomez, asked Cabrera: "In regards to 2007, your testimony is that you are the one who ordered Rydlyme?"

"That's correct," Cabrera said, agreeing with Lujan that Villagomez and James Santos did not ask him to buy the product.

Special treatment

Terlaje testified that the \$120,000 2007 contract to purchase Rydlyme was rushed and that the payment was made ahead of other vendors that CUC owed at the time.

Terlaje said she did not sign the first contract after noting some deficiencies. She said she called CUC's then acting chief financial officer Joanne S. Paraiso to whom she expressed her concerns.

Torres showed Terlaje a CUC receiving report indicating that CUC got 3,000 gallons of Rydlyme on Nov. 19, 2007. She agreed with Torres that the changes in the term of payment in the second contract were the result of her concerns.

When asked if she believes Blue Pacific got special treatment since it merely got paid as part of a contact, Terlaje said she believes so if there are people pushing to pay for the contract even if there are other vendors waiting in line for payments.

Terlaje is a sister of Anthony Guerrero.



PINATA

A young girl prepares to hit the SpongeBob piñata as other children, parents and officers and crew of the U.S. Navy's Maritime Prepositioning Ship Squadron Three look on during Saturday's Easter egg hunt hosted by COMPSRON Three at the Saipan Community Church grounds in Susupe.

HAIDEE V. EUGENIO

Dollars spent on NMI lobbying decrease

By KRISTI EATON
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REPORTER

The amount the CNMI spent on lobbying continued to decline in 2008, yet convoluted ties to former Rep. Tom DeLay, who previously helped block the federal government from taking over local immigration, remain.

The CNMI spent a total of \$60,000 for Fleishman-Hillard Inc. and International Government Relations Group to lobby on behalf of the Commonwealth, according to the Center for Responsive Politics.

The co-chairman of IGR Group is Max Sandlin, one of six Texas Democrats who were

victims of GOP DeLay's push in 2003 to redistrict the state in favor of Republicans. Five of the six Democrats have since become lobbyist, with Sandlin joining IGR, which focuses on state and federal lobbying and media and public relations, among other things.

The Northern Marianas be-

came synonymous with Tom DeLay and lobbyist Jack Abramoff in the 1990s, when the CNMI government hired the Preston Gates firm to lobby for it. After DeLay made a trip to the CNMI, Abramoff helped him craft legislation, extending exemptions from federal immigration and min-

imum-wage labor laws to the Commonwealth.

During the last 10 years, the amount spent on lobbying for the CNMI reached its peak in 2001, when the government paid \$1.1 million to Greenberg Traurig, Abramoff's firm at the time.

According to the Center for Responsive Politics, in 2008 IGR had a total lobbying income of \$1.3 million. Other cli-

ents included the city of Santa Rosa, Calif., the National Football League and the National Association of Manufacturers.

Charles Reyes, press secretary for the Governor's Office, said the CNMI's ability to hire Washington, D.C. consultants, representatives, advocates or attorneys has been limited by the downturn in the economy, adversely impacting government collections.

Application for stimulus funds submitted today

By KRISTI EATON
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REPORTER

The Fitial administration is expected to submit today the application for the State Fiscal Stabilization Fund section of the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act, which is seen to bring in millions of dollars for education and government services to the CNMI.

Gov. Benigno Fitial earlier said the Commonwealth was expected to receive \$43 million. Of that, 81.2 percent must go to education, while the remaining 18.2 percent can go to public safety

and other government services, including assistance for elementary and secondary education and public institutions of higher education. It can also be used for modernization, renovation, or repair of public school buildings and higher education facilities.

Fitial said he would use the 18.2 percent, estimated to be about \$8 million, to cover the payroll costs for government employees for the rest of the fiscal year.

Charles Reyes, press secretary for the Governor's Office, said there had been a misunderstanding between the Public School System and the administration

over the funds. Members of the PSS Board of Education had said they disagree with some of Fitial's choices pertaining to the allocation and use of the money.

Fitial, along with the governors of the U.S. Virgin Islands, Guam and American Samoa, wrote to President Obama in March asking to let the Department of the Interior administer the stabilization funds, something BOE vice chair Herman Guerrero said he disagrees with.

But Reyes said it is a moot point because Obama did not grant the request, and the Department of Education will ad-

minister the funds.

"The governor wrote the letter, but it was never agreed to," Reyes said. "There's really no point in arguing over it now because we asked for it and we were not granted the request."

The funds will be disbursed to the Governor's Office, as stated in the law, not directly to PSS.

"This is one of the few grants where the Department of Education gives money to the govern-

ment," said Commerce Secretary Mike Ada, who has been coordinating the CNMI's effort for stimulus funds. "We've been working hand in hand with PSS."

He noted that if the governor did not need to sign off on the application, PSS would have already submitted it.

Guerrero earlier said he felt Fitial was going behind PSS' back by writing the letter to Obama, asking for Interior to handle the money.

But Reyes said Fitial was act-

ing within the scope of the Executive Branch.

Other funds

Ada said the CNMI is preparing to submit its first competitive grant application. The Community Oriented Policing Services grant provides money for the Department of Public Safety to hire additional law enforcement.

"It's not necessarily an infrastructure project. It's more a job creation type thing," the Commerce secretary said.

NMC student body president files grievance over forced resignation

By MONETH G. DEPOSA
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REPORTER

Ivan T. Mereb Jr., president of the Associated Students of Northern Marianas College, on Tuesday filed a formal grievance with the Office of the College President and the Dean of Student Services.

At issue is an incident in February where some college staff, allegedly working with instructions from the NMC management, harassed him and forced him to step down from his post with the student organization.



Mereb

"to use the procedures that have been put in place by the Board of Regents."

"I will see to it that this issue is resolved in the soonest possible time," she added.

To protect the privacy of individuals, she said she will never comment on specific grievances before they are properly adjudicated, along with the issues that involve student records, which are protected by local and federal statutes.

"As I have continuously stated, I recommend that any individual who feels that he or she has been wronged to make use of the grievance process that has been put in place by the NMC Board of Regents," said Fernandez.

The president said she will not allow any grievances to distract their momentum in meeting accreditation standards.

Restitution of other affected students

Saipan Tribune learned that Mereb was asked to resign by then acting dean of Student Support Services Leo Pangelinan for failing to comply with the ASNMC Constitution. Mereb reportedly did not maintain the required GPA for a student leader to stay at his post.

With the guidance of ASNMC advisers Larry Lee and Jack Kiyoshi, Mereb was able to keep his position after finding out that the ASNMC constitution states that "officer removal is a student initiative; not to be played or viewed as the role of the administration [college]."

Mereb said yesterday that he has not seen the grievance filed by Mereb.

"I have not seen the grievance that president Mereb has filed," said Fernandez, adding that she is glad the student leader is exercising his rights

as it affected the credibility of the student body.

"My grievance complaint is made toward the two institutional departments [dean of student services and president's office] that were responsible for bluntly issuing a forcible resignation upon me," Mereb's complaint stated.

The student body president said that during the two years he occupied the post, he has never been challenged during both the ASNMC general elections in fall 2007 and 2008 and no issue was ever brought against him or to the attention of the Student Election Commission handled by the Office of Students Activities and Leadership.

"Basing on the record of ASNMC, that was the first time such an action occurred...and I want it to become the last for ASNMC," he said. "I strongly feel that this should go on record; knowing that I was asked to step down from office and then informed that the individual who asked me to resign...didn't have the authority to do so."

When asked as to who entered and packed his things, Mereb said he isn't sure but is certain that they were sent by the "management." He said the incident happened when he was out of his office; it was witnessed by his peers.

He said the issue of removing student leaders from office should be vested solely upon the students of NMC, who are general members of the student body.

Mereb is asking for a meeting between ASNMC officers and college officials to iron out the issue. He also seeks immediate restitution for any members affected by the wrongful decision via a formal public apology.

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Kaipat: Delay gives Labor more time for transition

With the 180-day delay in implementing the federalization law, there is lesser urgency for any transition related to labor matters, according to Department of Labor Deputy Secretary Cinta Kaipat.

In her progress report on the implementation of Public Law 15-108 or

the new reform labor law, Kaipat said Labor can now await the outcome of Gov. Benigno R. Fitial's federalization lawsuit without employers and workers having to adjust their affairs in the interim.



Kaipat

"However, we have been meeting regularly with the federal authorities since last fall to explain exactly what we are doing, how we are making decisions, and why our procedures are working effectively," she said.

Kaipat said she believes Labor has good lines of communication and that the federal authorities have much better and more current information about Labor activities than has been the case in past years.

With respect to the federal stimulus issue, Kaipat said they believe that

the Labor Employment Services and Enforcement sections may qualify for grants under the federal stimulus funding.

"We are working on three proposals, and we expect to have them submitted shortly," Kaipat said. (*Ferdie de la Torre*)

TRIPLE J

From Page 1

executive officer of Triple J Enterprises Inc., said the store will focus on a wide selection of the freshest produce and chilled products possible.

The store will carry everything from fresh vegetables and soft fruits to yogurts, deli items and chilled meats. Triple J, which has a long-term lease of the building, has tapped local farm-

ers to supply fresh produce, while other products will be imported from the U.S.

"The idea is to have a great selection of perishables—bakery, produce, chilled meats, fresh vegetables, ice cream. We're trying to do a better job because that job is not being done properly here so that's what we're trying to do," Jones told *Saipan Tribune*.

Despite a downturn in the economy, which has forced many businesses to either reduce operations or shut down,

Triple J Saipan has been making bold moves. Jones said Triple J put in a "substantial" investment in the store.

"Every challenge creates an opportunity. We found out that Carmen Safeway closed operations and we had discussions with them... We feel that in a slowdown like this, you can't cut your way out of it, you have to grow out of it," Jones said.

Triple J Saipan will host a VIP night for the new store on Thursday, from 6pm to 8pm. The event consists of rib-

bon cutting, wine tasting and food sampling reception.

On Friday, Super Fresh Market will officially open to the public starting at 7am.

Store employees have been undergoing training from Guam personnel—from supervisors to computer experts and accountants—to help set up the store.

Jones earlier said that while Saipan's economy is at the bottom now, it will start getting better a year from now so long as the island doesn't lose its tour-

ists from China, Russia, Japan and Korea, among other things.

He calls on other businesses to grab the opportunities available to them.

Triple J Saipan Inc. is one of the companies under Triple J Enterprises Inc., which now has over 700 employees throughout the Pacific and has consistently ranked as one of the top companies in Micronesia. It has offices and businesses on Saipan; Guam; Palau; Majuro; Ebeye; Oakland, California; Shanghai, China; and Hakuba, Japan.

DEAD

From Page 1

was dead upon arrival and had been dead for approximately 1-2 weeks before it was discovered on Rota based on its emaciated state," said Nate Hawley, the division's herpetologist. "It appears that the snake was not crushed or harmed physically by the movement of cargo."

The statement said the snake apparently fell from a cargo being offloaded from the MV *Super Shuttle*, which had arrived at the Rota Commercial Seaport from Guam on April 4, 2009, at about 6:45am.

"The vessel arrived directly from

Guam with a mixed load of containers and break bulk cargo. The unloading procedure began at 9:30am starting first with the containers and then the break bulk items. After the containers were off-loaded a bundle of rebar was about to be off-loaded when Rota Terminal and Transfer employees noticed an object that appeared to be a piece of rope fall from the rebar bundle into the water next to the vessel. The object was retrieved and was found to be an emaciated brown tree snake," the statement says.

Quarantine Inspector Irene Apatang verified the capture at 9:45am and instructed Quarantine Inspector Joseph Atalig to retrieve the snake from Jason Maratita, the Commonwealth Port Au-

thority employee who recovered the snake from the water.

The find prompted the Department of Lands and Natural Resources' Division of Agriculture, Quarantine Section to conduct a thorough visual inspection of the vessel and cargo, including the contents of the previously off-loaded containers.

The U.S. Department of Agriculture Wildlife Services in Guam was also contacted about this voyage and it has been verified that all cargo had been searched prior to departure by BTS Detector Canines.

"It should be noted that BTS Canines are trained to search for live snakes (which have a distinct smell as compared to decomposing/dead snakes)

and that searching a vessel is considered to be extremely hazardous to the health of the canine," said the DFW statement.

Fish and Wildlife commended the Rota agencies and their staff for their excellent coordination, inspection, and implementation of protocol.

Fish and Wildlife director Sylvan O. Igisomar reminded residents that all snakes seen in the CNMI should be approached with caution and be reported immediately to the snake hotline 28-SNAKE (287-6253). If the snake sighted is confirmed as a brown tree snake, it may easily be killed by a blow to the head or body with a heavy object.

Brown tree snakes are typically described as brown to olive green in

color, with yellowish bellies, a triangular shaped head the is noticeably larger than the neck, with vertical cat-shaped pupils.

The brown tree snake was introduced in Guam in the 1940s and has since been responsible for the extinction of numerous bird and lizard species as well as frequent power outages. It also poses a health risk to infants.

"The Division of Fish and Wildlife would like to remind everyone that the CNMI has no native snake species! Therefore, it is extremely important to report all snake sightings to the DLNR-DFW immediately at the brown tree snake hotline at 670-28-SNAKE (670-287-6253). (*Saipan Tribune*)

DHS

From Page 1

has seen approximately 660 individuals who had questions. Most of these customers make InfoPass appointments...and those with appointments receive priority," she said.

DHS is reminding people to respect the time of their appointment and if someone cannot make it, they ask them to cancel the appointment so that someone else can sign up for the time.

Sebrechts emphasized that an Info-

Pass appointment is just for one person and requires additional appointments if several family members or colleagues plan to come together to the center.

She disclosed that the Application Support Center has also taken fingerprints for 133 applicants, including adjustment of status and naturalization applicants.

Sebrechts said about 42 adjustment of status—or green card—interviews have so far been conducted on Saipan.

Saipan Tribune learned that DHS will begin conducting interviews for N-400 applicants, or those seeking U.S. citizenship.

"Citizenship interviews are expected to start next month [May]," she said.

Based on the center's record, the following were the issues raised by those who visited the office:

- Applying for US-INA status prior to federalization;
- Extending CNMI immigration status, which they referred to CNMI immigration;
- Status after the federalization of CNMI IRs; and
- Questions about obtaining forms, where to file them, and assisting them in filling out U.S. immigration forms.

Sebrechts said queries related to the E2 CNMI investor and transitional worker status were also received by field representatives. They advised these people that those questions could only be answered when the proposed rules are issued.

The federalization law established two CNMI specific nonimmigrant classifications: CNMI Treaty Investors and Transitional Workers. Proposed regulations to implement these two classifications are currently under development by the U.S. Department of Homeland Security. Once completed, DHS will

publish the proposed regulations and there will be a public comment period.

So far, only the regulations governing the Guam-CNMI visa waiver program have been released, which include provisions that require tourists from China and Russia markets to obtain the necessary U.S. visa before they can visit the islands.

The DHS recently delayed for 180 days the implementation of the federalization transition period in the CNMI after considering the plight of the local government, business sector, and the CNMI community.

FUND'S

From Page 1

which has been micro-managing the Fund.

The Commonwealth Association of Retired Persons held a meeting last night to come up with ideas to help save the retirement system.

As of March 31, the CNMI government owes the Retirement Fund over \$196 million in employer contribution.

However, the FY 2009 interest penalty of \$953,478.64 has not been booked since it is not yet the end of the fiscal year.

Guerrero and Fund administrator Mark Aguon cited as an example the employer contribution originally set at 36.7 percent recommended by an actuary, but the Legislature passed a bill that was signed into law reducing it to 18 percent in January 2008.

A year later, the fiscal year 2009 budget pegged the government employer contribution at only 11 percent.

"The Legislature is also to blame. The government contribution was reduced from 36.7 percent to 18 percent to 11 percent yet they don't compel the agencies to pay," Guerrero said during yesterday's board meeting on Capitol Hill.

Guerrero said they look forward to the April 20 hearing on the Retirement Fund's 2006 lawsuit against Gov. Benigno R. Fitial, Department of Finance, and Finance Secretary Eloy Inos over the government's failure to remit required payments.

"The Fund sends out 30 letters a month to departments and agencies reminding them they're in arrears," said Guerrero.

\$25.3 million in drawdown

David S. Demapan, comptroller of the

NMI Retirement Fund, said during the first six months of FY 2009, the drawdown from investments already reached \$25.3 million.

This is already over 50 percent of the \$8.7 million in drawdown during the same period last fiscal year.

The fiscal-year-to-date cash flows show an increase of over \$1.9 million, which is some \$37.4 million in cash inflow minus over \$35.5 million in cash outflows.

"If we relate the cash flows to the drawdown from the investment, the investment contributes 68 cents to the dollar. On the flip side, the drawdown from the investment finances the operation by 72 cents to the dollar," said Demapan in his report to the six-member board of trustees.

In March alone, the Fund's withdrew \$4.431 million from its investments to finance pension costs, refunds, conversion from the defined benefit plan to

the defined contribution plan, staff payroll, and vendors.

In FY 2009, the board has authorized \$45 million for drawdown from investments.

"Due to the unpaid employer contributions, refunds, and rate hike in health insurance, the drawdown authorization of \$45 million may reach \$47.7 million before the end of the fiscal year," said Demapan.

Revenue, investment drop

During the first six months of FY 2009, the Fund reported revenue of \$11.2 million, which is 28 percent lower than the projected revenue of \$15.6 million.

"The unpaid employer contributions from the CNMI government, as well as autonomous agencies are the main contributors to the 28 percent decline," said Demapan.

The Fund projected earning of \$2.6

million in March but ended up with only \$1.7 million in actual revenue.

The Fund's investment portfolio is at over \$276 million as of February because the March investment statements have yet to be received from money managers.

The Retirement Fund warns that the CNMI pension program may be wiped out in five years or as early as three years due to the government's unpaid obligation and the impact of the global economic crisis on the NMI Retirement Fund's investment portfolio.

For FYs 2006 and 2007, a law legalized the suspension of payments to the Fund. Although the suspension was lifted in FY 2008, the government is still delinquent in its payments.

Government contributions are intended to fund current operations, pension and other benefit costs, as well as to service the long-term actuarially accrued liability.

Tudela eyeing stimulus funds for stalled dog shelter project

By MONETH G. DEPOSA
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REPORTER

The Saipan Mayor's Office is eyeing \$200,000 from the federal stimulus funds for the municipality's much-delayed dog control program.

"There is some portion of the stimulus funds that we can tap for the animal program... and we already submitted our application for the \$200,000 grant for the Saipan dog control program. Once we receive it, we will use the entire money for the project," said Tony Benavente, press information officer.

The Dog Control Rules and Regulations were first established in 2003. The Saipan Mayor's Office was then awarded \$75,000 as initial funding for the program, which until now has yet to be accomplished.

Saipan Mayor Juan B. Tudela earlier said that a small dog facility is being built in Lower Base. Yesterday, he confirmed that this shelter will serve as a temporary facility until a permanent one is built in Kagman—a new site for the project.

However, "all will still depend on the stimulus grant," he added.

The Kagman site is a 2,000-square-meter land adjacent to the Forestry Division site of the Department of Lands and Natural Resources.

The project was initially planned to be built in As Perdido and was supposed to house 20 dog kennels but Tudela said his office was barred from using the property. That prompted the mayor's office to temporarily move the



Tudela

project to Lower Base. Construction at the Lower Base facility was put on hold, however, after local permits were not issued. It was learned that some \$6,000 was used in procuring materials for the temporary shelter.

"We have now less than \$75,000 for the project...and once we get approval from the stimulus grant, we will begin work at the permanent site in Kagman," Tudela said.

Benavente said the mayor's office had already complied with all local permits when it first planned the dog shelter in As Perdido.

"Because we transferred the plan to Lower Base, even temporarily, we need to process new local permits and that's what delays the construction of the temporary small facility now," Benavente said.

What if they fail to get the stimulus grant? "Whoever sits as the next mayor, he needs to work very hard to make it happen," said Tudela, who is in his last term of office.

The Kagman property can accommodate 10 cells and up to 20 dogs. Besides the dog kennel, an administrative office is also being planned for the site.

The mayor's program was initially allocated \$75,000 for this project under Saipan Local Law 9-12. However, this was stalled for many years due to the lack of additional funding.

In July 2006, DLNR agreed to transfer the DLNR's piggery building in As Perdido to the mayor's office, to be developed into an animal shelter for the stray dog control program.

Fund says former congressman 'double dipping'

By HAIDEE V. EUGENIO
haidee_eugenio@saipantribune.com
REPORTER

The NMI Retirement Fund has said that results of an internal audit found that former Rep. William Torres has been "double dipping" and asks him to return some \$100,000 in retirement benefits.

Double dipping refers to the receipt of retirement benefits and an employment salary at the same time.

But Torres said he will contest the findings, a copy of which he has yet to obtain from the Fund.

"They say I'm double dipping and says about \$100,000 should be recouped from me. What's their basis? The reason I came here today is to get a copy of the internal audit findings," he told *Saipan Tribune*.



Torres

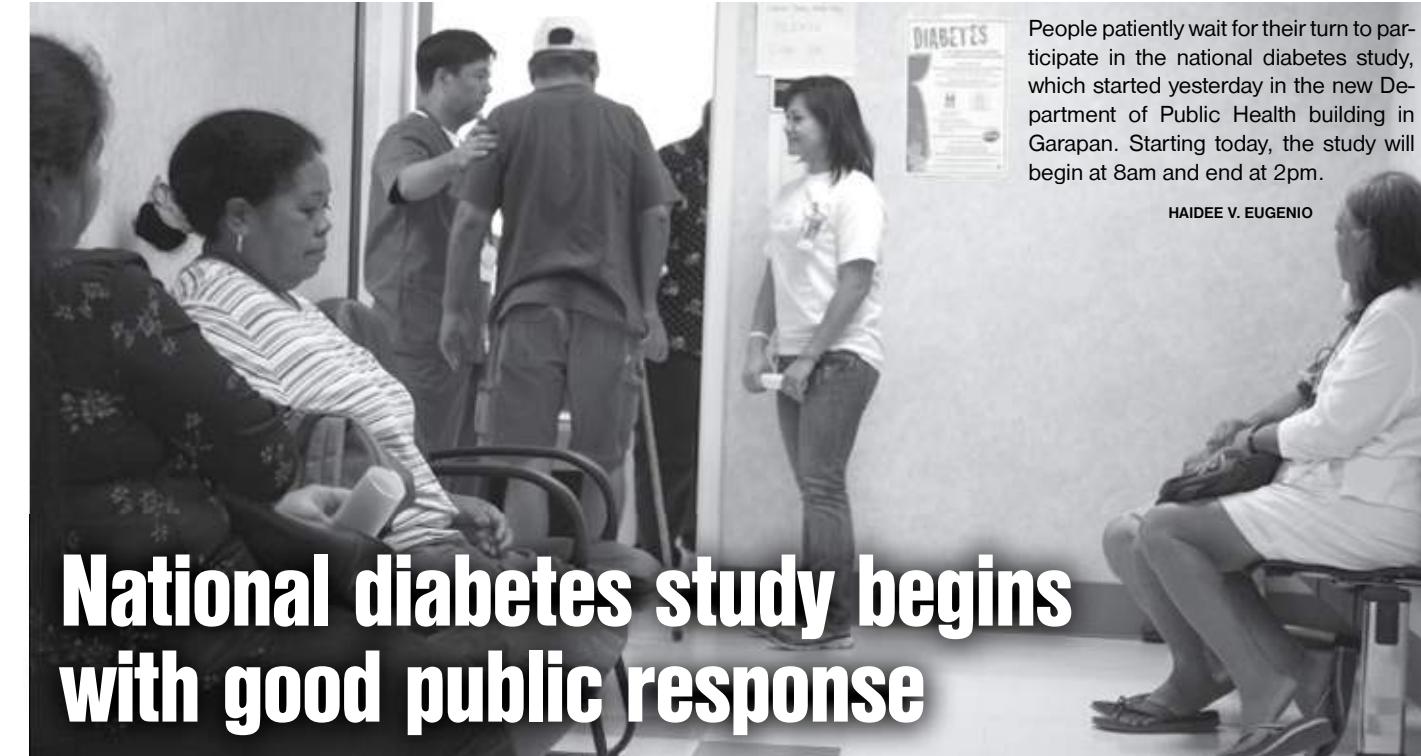
Torres said he is an independent contractor for professional services. Among his current clients are the Saipan Mayor's Office and the Saipan Municipal Council.

During the NMI Retirement Fund's Board of Trustees meeting, chair Juan T. Guerrero confirmed that an internal audit found that Torres is double dipping, which is against the law.

Guerrero recommended that Torres seek legal counsel to present his case.

He said Torres cannot perform his independent contract service in government office.

"Your situation is not unique. This is something that we take



HAIDEE V. EUGENIO

National diabetes study begins with good public response

By HAIDEE V. EUGENIO
haidee_eugenio@saipantribune.com
REPORTER

In just an hour since the national diabetes and kidney disease study began yesterday at the Department of Public Health, at least 20 individuals had already completed participation and the number continued to grow as the hours went by.

People started lining up long before yesterday's opening schedule of 10am.

An hour later, people were still arriving to sign up for the study that aims to find the cause of kidney disease and diabetes.

Starting today, the temporary clinic for the research study at the new DPH building in Garapan will open at 8am and close at 2pm.

Dr. Robert Hanson of the National Institute of Diabetes and Digestive and Kidney Diseases said they would like to get as many participants as possible during the nine days that they will be holding the research.

"It's more than we expected," Hanson said of the number of participants at the opening hours of the study.

The research team expects to have 500 to 1,000 participants, who will receive a one-time payment of \$25.

seriously. We as trustees need to ensure we protect the Fund. You're given the opportunity to defend yourself. There's no determination yet. It might be prudent to get counsel," Guerrero told Torres during the meeting.

Fund administrator Mark Aguon wrote a letter to Torres on April 1 about his double dipping, and Torres has 30 days to take action.

Aguon, meanwhile, said there are currently 28 double dipping retirees, mostly teachers at Northern Marianas College and the Public School System. These teachers are allowed by law to double dip but only for two years.

"People who don't have diabetes have to fast before coming in here; those who have diabetes don't have to fast," Hanson told *Saipan Tribune*.

Hanson said the study aims to find the genetic disposition for kidney disease and diabetes and knowing the cause of these diseases will help prevent and treat them better than what is being done right now.

The CNMI has been found to have the third largest number of diabetes cases after Pima Indians and Nauru. Based on 2002 statistics, there are over 3,000 known diabetes patients in the CNMI, mostly Chamorros and Carolinians, and other Pacific

islanders.

Hanson, who is based in Phoenix, is accompanied by representatives from the Guam-based Institute for Disease Prevention and Research led by Jenny Duenas to conduct the study, with the help of DPH staff.

The study will continue on April 14, 15, 18, 20 and 21 at DPH, and at St. Jude's Renal Center at the back of Saipan Health Clinic on April 16 and 17.

Those who are qualified to participate in the study are individuals who are at least 18 years old, not pregnant, and at least 50 percent Chamorro, Carolinian, other Micronesian, or Filipino.

Qualified individuals are asked to participate in a 20- to 30-minute interview, and undergo blood pressure measurement and blood and urine tests for diabetes and kidney disease.

The study is sponsored by the National Institutes of Health and MIDPR, in collaboration with the CNMI Diabetes Coalition, Club Hinemlo-ta, Substance Abuse Prevention Coalition, and Hinemlo' Familia Org. In Guam, at least 1,800 individuals took part in the same study.

Frances Demapan and Chai-lang Palacios, of the Hinemlo' Familia, said they're trying to help recruit participants for the study.

REQUEST FOR PROPOSALS For Food and Other Concessions

The 2009 OCEANIA BASKETBALL TOURNAMENT ORGANIZING COMMITTEE (hereafter "Committee") is responsible for the operation, management and administration of the 2009 Oceania Basketball Tournament. To assure that the Tournament participants and spectators are accorded adequate food and beverage, merchandise, and other services at the Tournament, the Committee hereby requests proposals from currently licensed companies experienced and capable of providing such services and wish to be considered for the following Contracts:



The RFP Package will be available until April 24, 2009 during business hours at the Law Office of Michael A. White, Joeten Center, Susupe, Saipan.

A Pre-Proposal Conference will be held at 1:00 p.m. on Wednesday, April 29, 2009 at the Conference Room at the Gilbert C. Ada Gymnasium.

Proposals are due no later than 4:00 p.m. on May 4, 2009 at the Law Office of Michael A. White, Joeten Center, Susupe, Saipan.

Proposers are required to pay a \$50.00 non-refundable fee for each copy of the RFP.

The Committee assumes no obligation of any kind for expenses incurred by a respondent to this Notice or the RFP package.

All inquiries must be in writing, and sent to Michael A. White at fax no. 234 9537 or emailed to mwhite@saipan.com.

GAO: Guam infrastructure not ready for buildup

By KRISTI EATON
kristi_eaton@saipantribune.com
REPORTER

A new Government Accountability Office report says Guam's infrastructure is inadequate for the military buildup, and is calling on the U.S. Department of Defense to provide more leadership in order to properly fund and coordinate the initiative.

The report, sent to Congress on Friday, noted there have been concerns that the island's infrastructure will not be prepared to handle the impact of the buildup, which will relocate 8,000 Marines and approximately 9,000 depen-

dents from Okinawa, Japan, to Guam by fiscal year 2014.

Construction is expected to start during fiscal year 2010. The initiative is expected to cost more than \$13 billion. Tinian will eventually be home to a warm base where the Marines will stay during training sessions.

"DOD and representatives for Guam have expressed concern that Guam's infrastructure and social services will not be prepared to handle the impacts of the buildup by the 2014 completion date because of the compressed timeline and the extensive impact of the buildup," the report stated.

For example, construction demands will exceed local availability of workers, the report said. Further, the buildup requires double the port capacity and the island's two major highways may not be able to handle the increased traffic seen from transporting supplies. Also, Guam's water and wastewater systems are near capacity, and demand may increase by 25 percent. The electric grid may not be able to support the buildup, as well.

"Although DOD plans to fund the infrastructure requirements directly related to the military buildup and realignment as well as contribute some funds toward civilian infrastructure re-

quirements such as utilities and roads, the Government of Guam is largely responsible for obtaining funding for civilian requirements related to the buildup," the report stated.

Guam Gov. Felix Camacho told the Senate Committee on Energy and Natural Resources in May 2008 that the island would request \$6.1 billion for fiscal year 2010.

Although the Interagency Group on Insular Affairs has made some effort for federal collaboration to assist the Guam government, GAO stated, it does not have the authority to direct other agencies' budgets.

The report calls on the Department of Defense to use an executive order that specifies all executive agencies are to give priority consideration to requests from defense-affected communities. The Office of the Secretary of Defense has not provided the high-level leadership necessary to coordinate and make policy and budgetary decisions among the agencies and governments, according to the report.

The report also recommends that the Department of Defense should hold regular meetings of a committee composed of 22 federal departments and agencies.



THANK YOU

Saipan Mayor Juan B. Tudela, second right, presents certificates of appreciation to the Tournament of Champions represented by DFS Galleria's Mariano Fajardo, left, and Ben Babauta, second left, and to the Division of Forestry represented by state forester Vic C. Guerrero, right, for their contributions in the beautification projects at the CNMI-Japan Cultural Center at the Sugar King Park in Garapan yesterday.

There are more option other than military—UoG

BY MONETH G. DEPOSA
moneth_deposa@saipantribune.com
REPORTER

University of Guam representatives were on island yesterday to persuade CNMI youths and high school seniors to pursue college education without having to worry about finances at the same time.

Dr. Julie Ulloa-Heath, UoG's dean of Enrollment Management and Student Services, emphasized during yesterday's "College Night" at the Multi-Purpose Center that it is their prime objective to encourage, motivate, and change the minds of students who plan to hold off college education in favor of pursuing a military career.

She said the huge percentage of students in the CNMI who immediately join the U.S. military is "alarming" and poses a serious concern among the youth.

In yesterday's session, Ulloa-Heath's group assisted 12 students look for available financial assistance they can tap in going to UoG; helped them step-by-step in answering the available forms; and provided tips on the courses they may want to take at the university.

Besides the financial aid fair, the group also held three presentations that spanned from 10am and 7pm.

A recent survey conducted by the Northern Marianas College among seniors at the three biggest public high schools on island showed that nearly a hundred students have already made

up their mind to join the military so they can immediately bring additional income to their families and be more independent and self-reliant.

Also, based on the Public School System record for school year 2007-2008, about 21 percent or 131 public school graduates joined the military while 44 percent opted to go to college. There were 595 graduates in the last school year.

Dr. Ulloa-Heath said the students need to be informed properly on what are the "other" options available to them after graduation.

She agreed that because of the state of economy, benefits provided by the military sounds "very encouraging" among students.

"We're here to ultimately motivate them and change their minds from holding off their college degree over the military. If they're worrying about finances, we're here to help identify the many sources of funding for their college [education]. It is important that they get their degree first and then they can join and go to the military," she said.

Among the financial aids available at the University of Guam include the Pell grant, which awards \$5,500 per academic year; Stafford loans that provide also \$5,500 assistance per student; private scholarships; federal work study program, GovGuam Scholarship program; Board of Regents program; and many others.

Sablan: Open Govt Act must be construed liberally

By FERDIE DE LA TORRE
ferdie_delatorre@saipantribune.com
REPORTER

Rep. Tina Sablan has asserted that the Open Government Act must be liberally construed in favor of disclosure, and the burden of proving that an exemption applies must fall on the government.

Sablan told *Saipan Tribune* that during last week's hearing on her lawsuit against Gov. Benigno R. Fitial and Finance Secretary Eloy Inos, she pointed out that the government has failed to justify their claimed exemption from the Act.

After listening to the arguments, Superior Court Associate Judge David Wiseman said he will issue a decision at a later time.

The congresswoman said if the court agrees that the records she is seeking are not relevant to the pending 903 litigation (Fitial's lawsuit against federalization), then the status and timing of the litigation should also necessarily be irrelevant, and there is no reason to

wait until after the litigation has been resolved to release those records.

"The real issue is whether or not expenditures of public funds can be shielded from public scrutiny," Sablan said.

The people of the CNMI, she argued, have the right to know how public funds are being spent—"this right is the essence of OGA."

Sablan said that during the hearing, assistant attorney general Braddock Huesman, counsel for Fitial and Inos, conceded before Wiseman that they could go ahead and release some documents after all.

In the defendants' motion to dismiss, Huesman said it is clear that the federal government has already attempted to use Sablan in an effort to gain an upper hand in the litigation against federalization.

Huesman said forcing the CNMI to release sensitive information that the

federal government is not entitled to contravenes the purpose of a statute that deals with litigation exceptions to the OGA.

Huesman said the public records requested by Sablan, by necessity, are either protected by attorney-client privilege or they are not relevant for discovery purposes.

Sablan filed the lawsuit against Fitial, Inos, and acting Attorney General Gregory Baka, to compel the administration to disclose where it is getting the money to fund the lawsuit against federalization. The Superior Court recently removed Baka from the lawsuit.

The congresswoman asked the court to issue an order mandating Fitial and Inos to fulfill their obligations under CNMI law by making available the requested materials within 48 hours of the court's decision.

Cleanup supplies available at DEQ

Trash bags and gloves for the Earth Month Islandwide Cleanup can be picked up by registered participants at the Division of Environmental Quality office in Gualo Rai on Middle Road.

As of Monday afternoon, 1,307 partici-

pants had pre-registered for the cleanup scheduled this Friday, April 17, 2009.

The Division of Environmental Quality, Rotary Club of Saipan, Marianas Visitors Authority, and Marianas Tourism Education Council are the

co-organizers of the islandwide cleanup. Supplies were donated by MVA and McDonald's.

For more information on how to participate in the cleanup, contact Joe Kaipat at 664-8500 or Angelo Villagomez via e-mail at angelovillagomez@gmail.com. (PR)



HAIDEE V. EUGENIO
Dr. Julie Ulloa-Heath, standing, right, dean of the University of Guam's Enrollment Management and Student Services, assists a prospective student fill out a free application for federal student aid during UOG's student recruitment session at the Pedro P. Tenorio Multi-Purpose Center in Susupe yesterday.

Candidates to vandals: Stop defacing campaign signs

Gubernatorial candidate Juan Pan Guerrero and his running mate, Rep. Joe Camacho were saddened to learn that campaign signs of other candidates for governor and lieutenant governor have been damaged.

"We have also had a few of our road signs damaged and have had to replace them. This highlights the need for all candidates to ask their supporters to respect the democratic process and not engage in vandalism," said Guerrero.

Early in the campaign season, members of the Committee to Elect Juan Pan and Joe Camacho attended a workshop conducted by the Office of Public Auditor concerning campaign ethics.

"When I ran for the House of Representatives, we invited the Public Auditor to make a presentation on ethics and compliance with election law," said Camacho, candidate for lieutenant governor. "We



CONTRIBUTED PHOTO

A signboard advertising the gubernatorial tandem of Juan Pan Guerrero and Joe Camacho is torn up by vandals over the weekend.

Rota's submarine volcano under study anew

By HAIDEE V. EUGENIO
haidee_eugenio@saipantribune.com
REPORTER

Rota's submarine volcano, NW Rota-1, which has been actively erupting since it was first visited in 2003, is again under study by the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration on-board R/V *Thomas G. Thompson* from April 3 to 17.

NW Rota-1, whose summit is about 1,700 feet below the ocean surface, is located about 37 miles northwest of Rota.

University of Guam faculty member Ernie Matson took some of his graduate students out in the research vessel to learn about the research trip.

"This is the only site in the world where deep underwater

eruptions have been directly observed and recorded by hydrophone. The pressure at this depth makes it safe to study the eruptive activity up close," the group said in a blog about the research expedition.

With support from the U.S. National Science Foundation, the

research team hopes to take

advantage of the extraordinary opportunity to learn more about how submarine eruptions work and how they effect the surrounding ocean environment. For example, hydrothermal vent animals live on top of the volcano in the midst of these eruptions.

"We do not know exactly what we will find when we visit the volcano between April 3-17, 2009, but we have an extraordi-



CONTRIBUTED PHOTO

Dr. Verena Tunnicliffe, a deep-sea vent animals expert from the University of Victoria, discusses the research expedition with the students in the Computer Lab of the R/V *Thompson*.

nary team of scientists and engineers poised to make the most out of this scientific opportunity," the research group said.

The research group uses Ja-

son, a remote operated vehicle, to view the vents.

For more information about the research, visit <http://nwrota2009.blogspot.com>.

did the same again this year with the Juan Pan and Joe Camacho campaign. We are running a clean and professional campaign."

"We ask those people who

are damaging our and others' signs to please respect the law," said Clyde Norita, chairman of the Committee to Elect Juan Pan and Joe Camacho. (PR)

**PROCUREMENT AND SUPPLY
CNMI GOVERNMENT**

**INVITATION TO BID
ITB09-DLNR/DFW-065**

SUBMISSION/OPENING DATE: APRIL 23, 2009 • TIME: 10:30 A.M.

"PURCHASE AND INSTALLATION OF A TWIN ENGINE OUTBOARD TO INCLUDE REMOVAL OF OLD ENGINE FOR THE DLNR - DIV. OF FISH & WILDLIFE-ENFORCEMENT SECTION"

COPIES OF THE SPECIFICATIONS MAY BE PICKED-UP AT THE OFFICE OF THE DIRECTOR, DIVISION OF PROCUREMENT AND SUPPLY, LOWER BASE DR., SAIPAN, DURING REGULAR WORKING HOURS.

PREFERENCE IS AVAILABLE TO US CITIZENS OR PERMANENT RESIDENTS AS PER PUBLIC LAW 15-95 AND AS FURTHER AMENDED BY PUBLIC LAW 15-118 AND MUST BE SUBMITTED WITH THE BID IF PREFERENCE IS CLAIMED.

/s/ IGNACIO T. DELA CRUZ D.V.M.
SECRETARY OF DLNR

/s/ HERMAN S. SABLAR
DIRECTOR, P&S

COMMONWEALTH DEVELOPMENT AUTHORITY
P.O. Box 502149, Saipan MP 96950
Tel.: (670) 234-6245/6293/7145/7146 • Fax: (670) 234-7144 or 235-7147
Email: administration@cda.gov.mp • website: www.cda.gov.mp

CDA

PUBLIC NOTICE
April 14, 2009

Pursuant to Public Law 8-41, the Board of Directors of the Development Corporation Division (DCD) of the Commonwealth Development Authority thru its Chairwoman, hereby informs the general public that the DCD Board of Directors will meet on Thursday, April 16, 2009 at 10:00 a.m. The meeting will be held at the CDA Conference Room, Second Floor, Wakin's Building, Chalan Pale Arnold Road, Saipan. The agenda for this meeting is as follows:

AGENDA

I. PRELIMINARY MATTERS
1. Roll Call
2. ADOPTION OF AGENDA

II. PUBLIC COMMENTS

III. REPORTS
1. Financial Report – DCD
2. Loan Reports
a. Approved Loans & Bank Guarantees
b. Bank Guarantees Status' Report
c. Loan Status/Receivables Report
d. DCD Performing Loan Summary/Delinquency & Litigation

IV. OLD BUSINESS
1. Sy's Corporation

V. NEW BUSINESS
1. Borrowers' Requests

VI. OTHER MATTERS

VII. ADJOURNMENT

All interested persons are welcome to attend and to submit written or oral testimony on the above agenda items. (Note: Pursuant to Public Law 8-41, Section 13(a)(7) and Section 13(c), the Board may vote to meet in executive session)

/s/ MARCIE M. TOMOKANE
Chairwoman, CDA Board of Directors



U.S. Customs and
Border Protection

Mission focused

Safeguard America at Our Ports of Entry

U.S. Customs and Border Protection Officers are the nation's first line of defense, assigned to our international airports, seaports and land border crossings throughout the United States and along the borders of Mexico and Canada. They play a critical role in the nation's security: preventing terrorists from entering our country, guarding against criminal activities including weapons trafficking, drug smuggling and money laundering, and inspecting travelers for any illegal, prohibited or dangerous goods.

Can you wear the uniform of a U.S. Customs and Border Protection Officer? It takes outstanding people skills, sound judgment and a firm resolve to join our ranks, in addition to these requirements:

- Be a U.S. Citizen with 3+ years residency
- Be between the ages of 18-36
- Successfully pass a background investigation
- Have 3+ years general work experience

NOW HIRING

Customs and Border Protection Officer, GS-5/7 for CNMI locations of Saipan, Rota and Tinian.

Open Period: Monday, April 6, 2009 through Sunday, April 26, 2009. Apply online at www.cbp.gov/careers

 **COMMUNITY BRIEFS**
OES PTSA meeting today

The PTSA Officers of Oleai Elementary School would like to inform the parents and guardians of Oleai Elementary School students that there will be a PTSA meeting today, April 14, 2009, at 6:15pm, in the school cafeteria. Everyone is encouraged to attend. (PR)

Memorial Day committee meeting today

May 25, 2009 is Memorial Day, during which the CNMI will pay tribute to members of the U.S. Armed Forces who have passed away. The community will remember those who served the nation so that everyone may enjoy the fruits of freedom of a democratic society. This is to let all Memorial Day Committee members and all interested in being a part of the committee that we will begin to meet every Tuesday at 9am starting on April 14, 2009, at the Office of Military/ Veterans Affairs on Capitol Hill building 1364. (PR)

CPA field free for use but...

The Commonwealth Ports Authority informs the public that the CPA field at the airport is available to all free of charge. However, before anyone can use the field, it must be reserved with the CPA. Any unreserved activities are not permitted and must clear the entire field without demand for the reserved activity. Everyone's cooperation is requested and appreciated.

Brilliant Star School sets free presentation

The Brilliant Star School is offering a Parent Discovery Evening in place of its regular open house as part of efforts to share what a Brilliant Star education is.

The presentation, titled "What is Elementary?", will be held Thursday, April 16, 6:30pm. This will be another dynamic evening that will preview the elementary learning experience. Attendees may invite friends.

What to expect:

- A presentation of the 5th cosmic fable: *The Story of Numbers*.
- Examples of how we teach time management and the balancing of work choices
- Record keeping and assessment
- How we address classroom management
- Child work examples
- The characteristics of the 6-12 aged child, such as what changes you can expect in them as they grow, and how to support their development.

Brilliant Star School provides education for children 12 months to 12 years old. This special Parent Discovery Evening focusing on Elementary Education is open to the public.

For more information call Brilliant Star principal Rob Schultz at 323-7827. (PR)

John Gonzales Live's April schedule

April 15, 2009 LIVE – Replays 4/19 and 4/20 @ 7-8 pm

- Marpi UXO Brownsfield Cleanup Project
- DPL Secretary John DelRosario Jr., John Scott (AMPRO), Jim Callier (DEQ)

April 22, 2009 LIVE – Replays 4/26 and 4/27 @ 7-8 pm

- Public awareness on living with autism
- Parents and service providers

April 29, 2009 LIVE – Replays 5/3 and 5/4 @ 7-8 pm

- Current Issues with Family Court
- Kenneth L. Govendo, Associate Judge, CNMI Superior Court

Shows Air on KSPN Channel 2. **LIVE** Text-in: 285-META; **LIVE** Call-in: 287-4230; Email: johngonzales@pticom.com.

Chacha Oceanview celebrates Health Week

The Chacha Oceanview Junior High School will be celebrating its annual Health and Wellness Week from April 14-17, 2009. This year's theme is "Nutrition, Exercise and Discipline...Health for life." This week, students and parents will be participating in different events for each day. The scheduled events are as follow:

April 14 "Health for life" walk: Students are encouraged to join us from 3pm-6pm to do a walk around the soccer field. T-shirt will be given to participants that complete 15 laps. There will be other giveaways for the event.

April 15 Healthy Snacks Day: Students are encouraged to bring healthy snacks to school for the day. There will be prizes for the homeroom class with the most number of participants.

April 16 All Sports Day: Students will be participating in various sports activities with other students from Hopwood Junior High School.

April 17 Sports Expo and parents' softball game: We are inviting athletes from various sports to interact with students and give students pointers on staying physically fit.

We are also inviting parents that wish to play softball on this day after school with COJHS staff. Contact Joe San Nicolas at 237-3921 if you wish to participate. We would like to invite you as our parents to take time to participate in any of the activities. (PR)

CPA triennial disaster drill Wednesday

The Commonwealth Ports Authority is holding their Trien-

nal Disaster Drill Exercise on April 15, 2009, from 9am to about 12pm. This drill allows CPA and other CNMI government agencies to review and assess procedures that are to be adhered to, to safely respond to a disaster, should it occur at the Saipan International Airport. This year's drill includes an aircraft incident scenario. Emergency vehicles from different agencies will be traveling to and from the Saipan International Airport for the duration of this drill and for the public not to be alarmed. (CPA)

Marianas High School schedule

April 14	4 th Quarter begins
April 9-13	Easter Break
April 15	3 rd Quarter Report Card Distribution/ Open House, 4-6pm MHS Campus
April 27-May 1	SAT10 test (grade 9 and 11)
May 4-15	Advanced Placement Exams
May 18-22	PSS SBA Tests
May 25	No classes (Memorial Day)
June 11	Graduation Ceremony
June 15	End of 4 th Quarter

For questions and concerns, contact 237-3206. (PR)

PAWS sets public meeting

PAWS is having a no-host meeting at Coffee Care on April 30. The meeting is open to the public. All those interested in volunteering for PAWS and saving the non-profit organization are encouraged to attend the meeting. RSVP to Bobbi Grizzard no later than April 29 at bgrizzard@saipan.com or call 483-9464. Alternatively, you may contact 285-PAWS. (PR)

KagES April calendar of events

April 14	Students/teachers return to classes
April 17	Early dismissal for all students at noon
April 17	Quarter Report Cards distribution at 1:30pm-4:30pm
April 27-May 1	SAT 10 Assessment for 3 rd and 5 th grade students

Income tax return deadline

The Division of Revenue and Taxation wishes to inform all CNMI residents that the deadline for filing of the 2008 individual Income Tax Return is Wednesday, April 15, 2009, at the office of the Division of Revenue and Taxation located at the Joeten Dandan Commercial Center. Deadline hours for April 15, 2009 are from 7:30am to 4:30pm. (PR)

Quarterly tax return deadline

The Division of Revenue and Taxation wishes to remind all CNMI residents that the 2009 1st Quarter deadline for filing the quarterly tax returns is Thursday, April 30, 2009. The Division of Revenue and Taxation will be open from 7:30am to 4:30pm on Thursday, April 30, 2009. The office of the Division of Revenue and Taxation is located at the Joeten Dandan Commercial Center. For more information, call 664-1000, 664-1043 Compliance Branch, or 664-1066 Collection Branch. (PR)

SVES registration schedule

San Vicente Elementary School Registration for School Year 2009-2010 is scheduled to begin on April 27, 2009 from 9am-12pm, and 1-4pm in the school registrar's office.

- Kindergarten- April 27-May 01, 2009
- First through Third Grade- May 4-8, 2009
- Fourth through Six Grade- May 11-15, 2009

Registration requirements: Birth certificate or passport, health certificate, health/ accidental insurance, map of residential location, power of attorney/ legal guardianship (if applicable), copy of report card, unofficial transcript with the address and phone number of the last school attended. (PR)

Sr. Remedios registration ongoing

Registration is now ongoing at the Sister Remedios Early Childhood Development Center for School Year 2009-2010. For more information, call 234-6247. (PR)

Attention to MHS 9th grader

A reminder to all Marianas High School incoming freshmen (9th grader): Make sure to verify with the MHS Registrar (237-3205) that you are registered for classes for school year 2008-2009. You have to provide a new blue health card to MHS for new school year. Deadline for submission of new blue health card from Department of Public Health is Tuesday, Sept. 2. For questions and concerns, contact 237-3206. (PR)

Marianas High School schedule

April 27- May 1	SAT10 Tests (Grade 9-11)
May 4-15	Advanced Placement Exams
May 18-22	PSS SBA Tests
May 25	No classes (Memorial Day)
June 11	Graduation Ceremony
June 15	End of 4 th Quarter

For questions and concerns, contact 237-3206. (PR)


Flashback
 A LOOK BACK AT PAST YEARS' HEADLINES
April 14, 1999**School money cut**

Gov. Pedro P. Tenorio has moved closer to overhauling the government's scholarship program after he signed a law imposing a cap on the financial aid that will be granted to on and off-island students for post secondary education. Under Public Law 11-77, which amends the scholarship act put in place in 1990, financial assistance to students enrolled in Northern Marianas College or in universities in the United States or its territories will be pegged at \$15,000 annually per student. The amount will cover expenses for tuition, textbooks, board and lodging, transportation and other school fees for a period of up to five consecutive years.

NMC board votes to restructure

The Northern Marianas College board approved yesterday a restructuring plan for a leaner top-level management team. The approval clears the way for issuing 90-day notices to vice presidents and other key positions. The restructured bureaucracy retains only one vice president, from three, and three deans. The downsizing was necessary to bring the college in line with budget limits in fiscal 2000. The three vice presidents will be issued notices while the board determines who gets to stay or leave. The policy also applies to the deans for Continuing Education, Professional Programs and the director for Information Technology Services.

April 14, 2000**Ex-DPW officials face legal action**

The Office of the Public Auditor has recommended the filing of legal action against two former officials of the Department of Public Works for approving an allegedly anomalous land survey contract with a private company in 1997. Public Auditor Leo LaMotte also instructed the Department of Finance to initiate actions that would result in the recovery of \$164,534 which were improperly made to Tinian Road Resurfacing Project contractor Castro & Associates. According to the OPA report released yesterday, the awarding of the land survey contract to C&A should have not taken place since the road paving contractor—Hawaiian Rock Products Corporation—had already included in its proposal the needed survey work for only \$8,339.

Teno appoints Manglona to Supreme Court

After weeks of anticipation, Gov. Pedro P. Tenorio yesterday finally announced the appointment of Associate Judge John A. Manglona to the Supreme Court, almost 16 months since the retirement of former Chief Justice Marty W.K. Taylor. At the same time, he named lawyer Eric S. Smith to the Superior Court to succeed the judge if he gets the advice and consent of the Senate as required under the Constitution. There was no immediate reaction from Judge Manglona on his nomination. His office said he was on the other telephone line when Tribune called him up to seek his comment. If confirmed, he will join Chief Justice Miguel S. Demapan and Associate Justice Alejandro C. Castro to the three-seat judicial chamber. The two were appointed by Mr. Tenorio in July 1999, the same time he named Judge Manglona to the lower court.

April 14, 2003**NMC to restrict nursing program from foreign students**

The Northern Marianas College remains committed to pursuing its Pacific Gateway project but it would limit its international enrollment to the English program. NMC president Kenneth E. Wright said the college would concentrate primarily on teaching English, indicating that not all NMC programs—particularly the expensive ones like Nursing—would be opened to foreign students. Wright maintained in a recent interview that teaching English would be a very lucrative business for the NMC. He said the NMC just needs to dig up the "gold mine" and profit from it.

DOF stops Marianas Lottery raffle promo

Due to some legal concerns raised by the Attorney General's Office, the Marianas Lottery was prevented from going ahead with its planned raffle draw for the brand new 2003 Ford Ranger pick up truck. Marianas Lottery GM Marie Coleman sought to assure its customers, though, that the raffle draw may still push through as local lottery officials are set to meet this week with Department of Finance to iron out any glitches in the raffle promotion. "So please hold on to your tickets purchased from March 29, 2003 to April 11, 2003 since we were informed they [Department of Finance] would try to meet with us this week," said Coleman in a statement.

Flame Sako Resort working on a master plan

By KRISTI EATON
kristi_eaton@saipantribune.com
REPORTER

Department of Public Lands Secretary John Del Rosario says he is hopeful construction on the multimillion dollar Flame Sako Resort and Spa will begin by the end of the year.

Officials from the resort are currently working on the master plan.

"That master plan will be used to determine where the main facility will be and other facilities and other components of the project. And it will also

be used for purposes of landscaping, which is going to cost close to a million dollars," Del Rosario said.

Once the master plan is complete—which he anticipates will be in the next couple months—a hearing with the Coastal Resources Management Office will be conducted.

"Once CRM signs off, it's go," the official said.

Last month, the hotel broke ground on the \$60 million to \$80 million facility.

At the ceremony, Gov. Benigno R. Fitial urged all permitting

and regulatory agencies to expedite the processing of permits to complete the project.

"This project's success affects our Commonwealth's overall economic progress

and the livelihoods of our local residents. This project will create jobs, attract tourists, bring more revenue into our economy, and provide more funding for government operations," Fitial added.

Flame Sako Resort and Spa is planned as a "six-star" hotel with 357 rooms in As Matuus.

Del Rosario said the project also includes a large water park,

and a convention center that can accommodate 500 people.

The Legislature approved on Feb. 4 Flame Sako's land lease agreement with the Department of Public Lands.

Bangladeshi community marks New Year today

The Bangladesh Cultural Group in the Northern Marianas Islands is inviting all members of the Bangladeshi community and the general public to a celebration of the Bangladesh New Year today, April 14, at the Garapan Central

Park, from 6pm to 11pm.

The celebration, called Suvo Noboborsho, will usher in the Bangladeshi year of 1416 and will feature several cultural activities like songs, dances, and others. There will also be din-

ner, serving Bangladeshi food. Organizers have invited some special guests to the event, including Rep. Tina Sablan and Marianas High School teacher Ron Hodges.

"We would like to invite ev-

erybody to come and see our cultural show and to join us in celebrating the Bangladesh new year," said Rakibul Islam Minto, president of the Bangladesh Cultural Group, and Habiullah Badal, secretary. (PR)

NMC workshops, Career Fair will showcase employment prospects

High school and college students are encouraged to attend the Northern Marianas College's Career Center's Career Development Workshops on April 14, 16, and 21 and Career Fair on April 23. The workshops and the fair are the college's activities in observance of Career Discovery Month. A door prize will be given to the first 10 people at each of the workshop sessions and the fair.

At the Resume Building Workshop on April 14, participants will learn how to build professional resumes, reflecting skills, knowledge, and education.

The Self-Employment Workshop on April 16 will discuss the fundamentals of business planning.

The Interviewing Techniques & Etiquette Workshop on April 21 will reflect on how to prepare

for an interview, how to present oneself at an interview, and how to follow-up. Participants will also be able to practice their enhanced skills in a mock interview towards the end of the workshop.

All workshops, which will be held in Room D-1 at the College's As Terlaje campus, have a morning session from 10 am to 12 pm and an afternoon session from 3pm to 5pm.

The Career Fair, which will showcase the employment opportunities in the CNMI, will be held at the parking lot between Building W and V at NMC and will run from 10am to 12pm.

For more information about the workshops or the Career Fair, contact Heather Santos or Lulu Wang at 234-5498 ext. 1348/1, e-mail heathers@nmcnet.edu or luluw@nmcnet.edu, or log on to www.nmcnet.edu. (NMC)

NMC offers customer service courses

The Northern Marianas College, through the Division of Community Programs and Services' Community Development Institute, is offering

SHORT COURSES

Communication in the Workplace

April 20-24, 2009 (5-7 pm)
Room: N-5
Fee: \$95

Stress Management

April 27-30 & May 1, 2009 (5-7 pm)
Room: N-5
Fee: \$95

Basic Customer Service Skills Training

May 4-8, 2009 (5-7pm)
Room: N-5
Fee: \$95

Work Etiquette Training

May 11-12, 2009 (5-7pm)
Room: N-5
Fee: \$40

Time Management

May 13-14, 2009 (5-7pm)
Room: N-5
Fee: \$40

San Vicente Elementary School bagged the third place at the 14th Annual Academic Bee Challenge hosted by the Marianas High School Honor Society on Saturday at the Pedro P. Tenoio Multi-Purpose Center in Susupe.

HAIDEE V. EUGENIO

Coast Guard scrambles to control Hilo oil spill

HONOLULU—U.S. Coast Guard pollution investigators were on scene Friday, April 10, in Hilo Harbor in response to a small oil spill.

The Coast Guard was notified at 5am Thursday of a stationary sheen stretching from piers one and two in the harbor to more than 200 yards off shore.

Coast Guard investigators from Marine Safety Detachment, Hawaii, on the Big Island, immediately responded to the scene of the incident. Investigators estimated that approximately 250 gallons of red-dye marine diesel from an unknown source caused the sheen.

Using money from the Oil Spill Liability Trust Fund (under authorization of the Oil Pollution Act of 1990), the Coast Guard hired Pacific Environmental Corp. to conduct the cleanup. PENCO is on scene with small boats and personnel on shore.

Recovery operations began Friday morning immediately after a safety briefing at first light. Divers in the water collected what was left of the oil. Coast Guard investigators collected samples and sent them to the National Marine Safety Lab for analysis.

The thin fuel, a type of marine diesel, appears red on the surface of the water. Generally, marine diesel fuels dissipate, evaporate or burn away quickly.

An HH-65 dolphin helicopter crew from Air Station Barbers Point was launched at 1:30pm Thursday, to document and evaluate the situation. On Thursday and Friday, most of the oil had been collected with absorbent pads.

The Coast Guard is working closely with state and county officials and with the Honolulu-based Clean Islands Council. On Thursday, Coast Guard—and contracted responders—imme-

dately deployed boom, which is a protective barrier placed on the water to prevent the spread of oil and other pollutants.

"The Coast Guard and its partners recognize the value of being prepared in oil spill events," said Chief Petty Officer Dustin Widman, a pollution investigator and incident management specialist stationed at Coast Guard Sector Honolulu.

"Fortunately, the Coast Guard trains frequently with state and county oil spill response partners and as a direct result from that preparation, we were able to respond quickly to this situation."

The source of the oil is currently under investigation.

"We are working to determine the extent and the source of the pollution," said Widman.

The Coast Guard advises any boat owners who may have suffered damages as a result of this oil spill to contact the National

Pollution Funds Center at 800-280-7118 or 202-493-6830 or by email at arl-pf-npfcclaim-sinfo@uscg.mil or by visiting www.uscg.mil/npfc. (USCG)



BIRTHDAY SHOUTOUT

Birthday greetings going out to Mrs. Karen Borja, the greatest secondary principal in the entire CNMI! May you have a great and wonderful day! With love, from your entire family and most especially your MHS Dolphin Family! CONTRIBUTED PHOTO

Opinion

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EDITORIAL

Mr. Medvedev's test

WASHINGTON—It's been nearly a year since Dmitry Medvedev took office as Russia's president following a much-publicized vow to attack what he called the "legal nihilism" of his country. His record so far is not looking good: Murders of Kremlin opponents have continued, both at home and abroad, without any action against the perpetrators—even though two of the suspects named by foreign police agencies sit in the Russian parliament. Medvedev raised some eyebrows when he met privately this year with the editors of the newspaper Novaya Gazeta following the broad-daylight murder of a reporter just blocks from the Kremlin. He told President Obama that he was concerned about the beating of human rights activist Lev Ponomarev on the night before last week's summit meeting. But Medvedev's words have yet to be followed by any tangible actions.

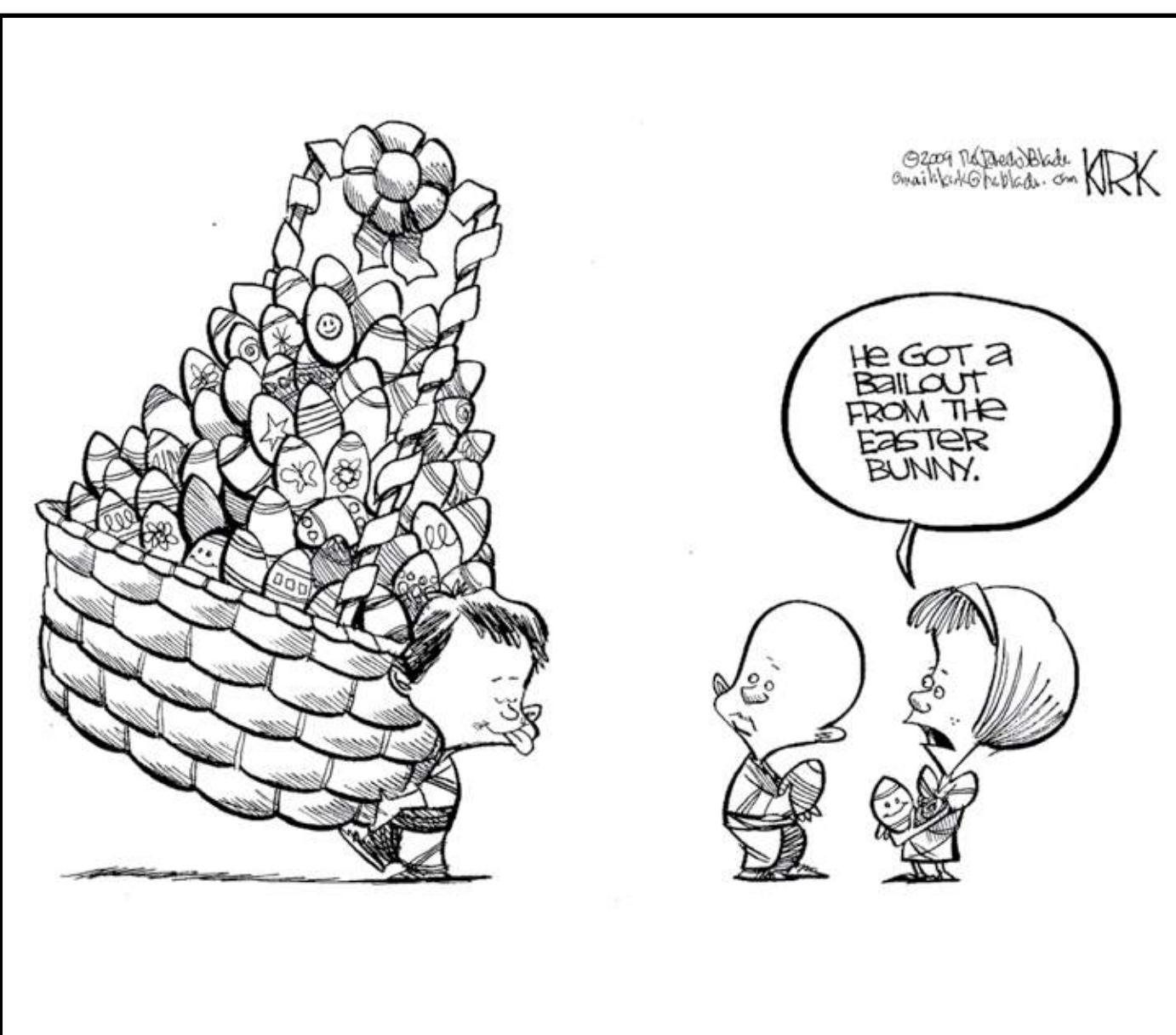
Now the former law professor faces a test that should settle whether he is capable of altering the authoritarian regime established by Vladimir Putin. Mikhail Khodorkovsky, the former oil magnate whose 2003 arrest and subsequent trial marked Putin's pivot away from Russia's experiment with liberalism, is on trial again. As in the Soviet era, the case is both a blatant setup and a grand piece of political theater intended to demonstrate the regime's ability to crush its opposition. If Medvedev allows it to go forward to its scripted conclusion—a lengthy extension of Khodorkovsky's sentence to a Siberian prison camp—the point will be proved that Russia still has no rule of law but only a ruler.

The charges against Khodorkovsky are so convoluted, the defendant said in his opening statement this week, that "I was completely deprived of the right ... to know what I have been charged with." In his previous trial, Khodorkovsky and co-defendant Platon Lebedev were accused of directing tax evasion by their Yukos oil company, which was eventually confiscated and sold off to state companies. Now they are charged with "embezzling" the same oil that they supposedly failed to pay taxes on. If they are convicted, they could be sentenced to another two decades in prison.

Khodorkovsky's first trial did much to damage Mr. Putin's image in the West and to poison his relations with Western governments. So why another show trial? One reason is that Khodorkovsky's current sentence is due to expire in 2011, just before Russia's next presidential election—in which Putin, now prime minister, may reclaim the nominal top post. Another is that the European Court of Human Rights, which Russia belongs to through the Council of Europe, has agreed to hear an appeal of Mr. Khodorkovsky's earlier case and could conceivably rule in his favor.

But it may also be that Khodorkovsky's trial is a means of crushing any reformist impulses Medvedev might have. If so, the president has the means to fight back: He could call for the charges against the defendants to be dropped or issue pardons to Khodorkovsky or some of his associates. If he does nothing, those in Russia and the West who have looked to this president as a liberal alternative will know that such thinking was wishful.

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God, Christ, the Holy Spirit, and Church IV

I was a member of the Community United Methodist Church of Guam in the early '80s. We gathered at a former warehouse of either the Salvation Army or the SDA near the University campus. While there, we were host to all kinds of community assemblies and meetings, including the boys and girls scouts, and the strategy sessions of the teachers' union while they defined their existence within the public school system. Our doors were never locked from the community, and the community never hesitated to protect our mutual interest in preserving the integrity of the community node.

Two decades later, I visited the Methodist congregation which had then built a million dollar structure in Mangilao, and at the Administrative Council meeting, one of the Church's luminaries sidled up to me and whispered: "You know, when you were here, the community was a part of how we understood ourselves to be the Church; now, we are devising ways to keep them away from us, ever vigilant in the encroachment of the wily community into our facility."

Not unlike other churches and religious buildings, the UMC got afflicted with the "edifice complex." With the advent of litigations against religious bodies for all forms of sexual harassments, the rise of the "ecclesiastical edifice complex," particularly its defense of its organization and cover-up of the crimes of personnel, intensified.

When we had the Marianas Resource Center in Oleai, we could count on cutting across the San Jose Parish Church to reach Beach Road. It seems that the Parish Council of late had seen it necessary to padlock the gate from pedestrian traffic, which now exists at the mercy of the stray dogs howling in the night.

Church

The Christian Church in its first five centuries was a marriage between the messianic expectations of the Jews and the catholicity of Greco-Roman civilization. As noted earlier, when the court of Constantine favored the *Christo Rei* image of the emergent *ecclesia*, the great medieval synthesis of the city of God and the city of man would form the Holy Roman Catholic Church. This structure understood itself to be in possession of an absolute and everlasting truth. It did not fare well in maintaining the authority of authenticity within its wings, and the shifting sands of the dunes made any notion of truth's infallibility relative.

The winds of change blew swiftly across the surface of Gaia, first with re-imaging the human view of the firmaments through Copernicus and Galileo, then shaking the tectonic social landscape with Darwin and Marx, and the relativity of all perceptions with Ein-

By JAIME VERGARA
Special to the Saipan Tribune

Vergara is a regular contributor to the Saipan Tribune's Opinion Section.



stein and his cohorts. Nationalism in Europe questioned the divine rights of empire; Henry VIII of England and Luther of Germany questioned the primacy of the Roman pontiff. Gutenberg's printing press saw the emergence of the scriptural paper pope, and the democratization of exegesis ushered the task of theology to the level of supply and demand in the marketplace.

The Bavarian Anschluss found favor with the German church and the Vatican did not pose serious complaints, so the resultant Holocaust rang the death knell of the Basilica across Trastavere.

An old pontiff named John XXIII impressively opened the doors and windows to drive medieval cobwebs away, let the fresh air of the Rhone and wild winds of the Sahara invigorate the rooms of its internal castles but the structure took one step forward and two steps backward. Theologians like Hans Kung, Edward Schillebeeckx, Charles Curran, Matthew Fox and Leonardo Boff would incur the displeasure of Cardinal Joseph Ratzinger, who is now Pope Benedict XVI. Contemporary female lay theologians like Elisabeth Schussler-Fiorenza, Rosemary Ruether and Uta Ranke-Heinemann were ostracized.

While the Vatican insists on the permanence of truth and its absolute possession of it so that those not in the communion are henceforth no longer to be referred to as "sister churches" or "separated brethren," the WWII aftermath unleashed a radical rethinking (from head trip to gut sense) of the Christian faith associated with names like Bultmann and Bonhoeffer. Tillich and the Niebuhrs, that pockets of Christian resurgence circles are evolving into seeds of communal faith dedicated to realistic living and the authority of authenticity.

The question these days is not, "What is the Church?" Rather, when one discovers a life-giving process in a crisis of decay, when there is the sprouting of a community of care that broadly sustains

See GOD on Next Page

EDITORIAL POLICY

The *Saipan Tribune* welcomes comments on any article, column, editorial, or topic that may be of interest to the public. Letters to the editor must include the name, address, and contact number of the contributor. Letters that are critical in nature should focus on issues, not personalities. Contributions consisting of 500 words or less have more chances of getting published. The *Saipan Tribune* reserves the right to publish a contribution or not; the right to edit submissions for length, accuracy, and clarity; and the right to publish and distribute contributions in print, electronic, or other media formats. Submissions may be sent via snail mail to the 2nd Floor, CIC Centre, Beach Road, Garapan, Saipan, 96950; fax (670) 235-3740; e-mail to editor@saipantribune.com; or through our website at www.saipantribune.com.

Political choices loom for new administration

By DAN BALZ
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WASHINGTON—President Obama has already made a down payment on many of his campaign promises. But a noisy and partisan debate has erupted over whether he has even begun to make good on his pledge to turn the page on the divisive politics of the past.

Changing the tone was a central theme behind Obama's candidacy. He said he would move the country away from the red-blue divisions of the past. But his budget blueprint was approved over unanimous Republican opposition and his stimulus package passed with scant GOP support. Deep philosophical differences between the two parties and political calculations by both sides overrode efforts to find consensus.

Two recent studies from the Pew Research Center have provided statistical fuel for the debate over Obama and polarization. One showed that, at this stage in his tenure, Obama has the widest partisan gap in approval rating of any president in the modern era (with 88 percent of Democrats but just 27 percent of Republicans approving). A second found that half as many Americans as in January believe that Republicans and Democrats are working together more than in the past.

Gary Jacobson, a political scientist at the University of California at San Diego and author of a book about George W. Bush's presidency titled "A Divider, Not a Uniter," no one should be surprised by the polarized response to Obama. "Everything in politics has been polarized for at least 15 years. You wouldn't expect anything to be different quickly. Especially when you have an administration that is taking bold action."

As Jacobson suggested, there are structural issues that contribute to the problem. One is the steady intensification of political polarization over the past three decades, the result in part of more ideologically homogenous political parties. Political campaigns stoke partisan differences and strain consensus. The media, from talk radio to the blogosphere to cable television, help inflame the debate 24/7.

Another factor is that, in a shrinking Republican Party, conservatives hold more sway—and they are most likely to disapprove of a Democratic president's performance. Exit polls show that 64 percent of Republicans who voted last November called themselves conservatives. That compares with 54 percent in 2000 and 49 percent in 1992. In contrast, the percentage of liberals in the Democratic Party has risen modestly over that same period.

Veterans of the Bush administration blame Obama for governing in a style they argue is designed to alienate rather than attract Republican support in Congress. "No president in the past 40 years has done more to polarize America so much, so quickly," Karl Rove wrote in the *Wall Street Journal*.

Obama officials counter that congressional Republicans have adopted a just-say-no posture. They argue that "changing the tone"

GOD

From Page 10

a comprehensive regimen of well-being, where compassion is evident from womb to tomb in self to family, tribe to nationality, race to the species, to the glorious life of the whole of creation—when all of that is evident, there and then one need not hesitate to label the doing and the deed, the Church.

"Church" as a verb, a dynamic activity, has had historic images that have been retained in common piety. The picture of the shepherd and the sheep around the reading of Psalm 23 is still capable of flooding tear ducts at the funerary. The valiant knight protecting the integrity of the manor still attracts the Dulcinea to covenants of service for God, king and country. Onward Christian soldiers still march the patriotism of the young to war. In our time, the picture of the social pioneer, cutting a wedge blade through the morass of social discrimination against ethnic and cultural minorities, and the marginalization of women, youth, same-sex unions, and the disabled, has retained the religious zeal and spiritual fervor of early causes in urban centers and the inner city.

The future calls for the ecozoic facilitator who will enable a planetary care beyond tree-hugging and John Muir's Sierra Clubs, where the deconstruction of the toxicity of the modern military-industrial complex and its single-minded devotion to commercial corporate structures happens alongside the flowering of random acts of kindness in the creative construction of the verdant new.

It is worth repeating this vision of the paleontologist who said, "The task before us now, if we would not perish, is to shake off our ancient prejudices, and rebuild the earth." When a group of people are doing that, regardless of the brand of garment they are wearing, I dare call them the Church. In which case, we may declare with the monks of old: *Praise the Lord, Christ is Risen! He is risen, indeed!*

should not be measured by the number of Republican votes for Obama's initiatives. "If the Republican Party chooses a political strategy of saying no to everything, the president can't stop doing the nation's business," the official said.

There's an old saying that politicians campaign in poetry and govern in prose. A better way of putting it in this polarized era is that, while candidates campaign with idealism, presidents govern with realism. Obama, like his predecessors, is learning there is a tradeoff between passing a big, ambitious agenda and producing broad consensus across party lines.

In the end, presidents conclude that results matter most. "George Bush was sincere about wanting to change the tone but he didn't want to sacrifice anything to do it," Jacobson said. "I think that's going to be true of Obama as well. It's nice to talk about bipartisanship and so forth. People like it. But it doesn't get you anything. What you want to do is achieve your political goals."

Dan Bartlett, communications director in the Bush White House, said Bush made genuine efforts to court Democrats early in his term, but concluded getting his agenda implemented and producing results outweighed the partisan consequences. "It dawned on us fairly quickly that the bigger the issue, the bigger the agenda, the more difficult this was going to be," he said.

Obama will face more tradeoffs between enacting the kind of legislation he wants and producing bipartisanship consensus as he tries

to enact other pieces of his agenda. His approval among Republicans has dropped from 41 percent in late January to 27 percent today and likely will dip more as the debates over his agenda intensify.

Health care could be particularly contentious and partisan. Already there is talk that Obama may seek a parliamentary strategy that would allow a health care package to pass with just 51 votes, thereby avoiding a Republican filibuster. That could help achieve his goal of producing major reform of the health care system but at the probable cost of further polarization. Who will pay the price for that?

Given the makeup of the two parties, a more reliable arbiter of the ongoing political debates may be the attitudes of political independents. To date, they are sticking with Obama. In the Gallup Poll's most recent weekly average, 60 percent of independents said they approved of how he was handling the job, statistically unchanged from the week of his inauguration.

As the next round of legislative battles begins later this month, the president must balance his desire to push through his agenda against a possible public backlash that he has embraced the politics of partisanship that he criticized on the campaign trail. Republicans risk being tagged as a party rooting for Obama to fail when the public clearly favors the president's priorities. Obama and Republicans face uncomfortable choices as they maneuver in the months ahead.

Balz is a political writer for The Washington Post.

Letters to the Editor

Clear explanations on Marpi clearing

I rescind my rant (see Letter to the Editor, April 6). Thanks to information provided through some admittedly belated dialogue with John Scott, president of Ampro, the firm doing the clearing in Marpi, and some fancy footwork on the part of the administration and its spokesperson Franz Reksid, my perspective has changed, and the only remaining question on my mind is "why now?"

A number of people had congregated at the Marpi clearing late last week to participate in an interview with KSPN's Lanni Walker. Scott explained to the group that the site contained the most concentrated collection of unexploded ordnance in the CNMI because it had been a munitions storage area in preparation for the bombing of Japan during World War II. Though a fire in the '60s had burned for two weeks, that only served to scatter the munitions that were there, and though a collection effort was made during Trust Territory times, there remained, said Scott, so much ordnance that he'd had to stop the collecting effort this week because Ampro's bunker/storage area was already full. A first detonation is scheduled for April 24.

Though there is no risk of the ordnance exploding if stepped on, Scott said it contains volatile explosives and therefore is a danger if the ordnance catches fire or is tampered with in any way. It also presents a security risk, he noted.

The Ampro contract includes a re-seeding of the area upon completion of the clearing. Scott said they'd cleared the mostly *tangan tangan* and other weeds in the area, but left most of the indigenous trees standing. He assured his listeners that that was the extent of the Ampro involvement—clearance of unexploded ordnance under an EPA-funded Brownfield grant.

While early information had tied the clearing to homestead development, Franz Reksid of the Department of Public Lands reminded the group that the DPL director has already publicly stated that there is no money for homestead development, nor is any likely for the next several years. A DPL staffer said DPL intended to keep the area groomed like a golf course in the interim—a rash promise indeed given the costs involved and the present state of the economy!

The fundamental question of why it was decided to clear that area now was, of course, not answered, though two possible answers—both of which could apply—have surfaced. One says that the Brownfield grant provides enough slack (extra dollars) to provide continuing funding for some DPL staff; the other says that the homestead angle was deliberately invoked as an election ploy. Public light on the matter has made it clear that the two issues are separate and independent of each other; the clearing will continue, but whether homestead development will follow is not at all certain.

Hopefully, between Ampro and DPL, billboards will now be erected to inform the public—and tourists—as to why the clearing is taking place, and that restoration of the area will occur as the clearing is completed.

Ruth Tighe
Tanapag, Saipan

Ban shark fishing, finning

I received disturbing news from a good friend in Palau concerning the Taiwanese and Chinese longline fleets. They want to restart the practice of shark finning. That means they catch the shark, cut the fins off while it's alive or dead, then throw the carcass into the water, retaining only the fins. It's used in a soup in Asia where there it is a status symbol to serve it. It has very little taste. As the apex predators of the ocean, removing sharks is a ecological disaster. Here is some of the info that was passed along to me: Please visit: <http://sharksanctuary.blogspot.com/> for the latest update on threats to Palau's sharks and marine environment. There are two bills before Palau's Senate that, combined, propose to repeal Palau's ban on shark fishing; permit shark finning; promote purse seining within Palau's exclusive economic zone; and exempt fishing companies from any export tax on fish taken from Palau. The private industry organizations Palau Chamber of Commerce (pcoc@palaunet.com) and Belau Tourism Association (bta@palaunet.com) and the government tourism office Palau Visitors Authority (pva@visit-palau.com) are alarmed at the potential damage passage of these laws could do to our tourism industry and are urging those around the world opposed to shark fishing, shark finning and unsustainable fishing practices to please express their opposition by e-mailing your comments to each of the respective organizations. Senate Bill SB 8-44 proposes to allow commercial fishing for sharks. Senate Bill SB 8-50 proposes to exempt fishing companies from tax on any fish caught by purse-seining methods. I encourage all people living in Micronesia to oppose such fishing practices and to write the listed above saying so.

William McCue
Wellington, Florida

Thank you

Once again, Lenten season came and pilgrims of different ethnicities flocked to the highest peak of Mt. Tapochao. It was a season when Christians remembered the sacrifices of Jesus who saved us from our sins. The Bicol Association in the Northern Mariana Islands once again volunteered last Friday their time to serve devotees with free ice-cold water and food as part of the organization's commitment to serve the pilgrims.

The general membership of Bianmi would like to thank all donors for their generosity that made the organization's religious community service possible: Coca Cola Micronesia Inc., WIRES, Primetek, MAFEA, Tripple "R" Auto Shop, Micronesia Wood Craft, Carnots, Cool Care, GPPC, Champstar Electronics, Sunny Wholesale, Philippine Consulate staff, Sky Castle Limo, J's Restaurant, group donors and individuals. Despite the cold early morning temperature, the spirit of Bayanihan among us still exists. Our sacrifices were blessed with the miracle of Jesus' resurrection as we commemorate his abiding presence in our minds.

Carlito J. Marquez
Past President, Bianmi-2004
Puerto Rico, Saipan

Satellite image and accompanying information are provided by the National Weather Service. For an updated weather forecast, visit the National Weather Service Guam Homepage: www.prh.noaa.gov/guam/

The Weather

5-Day Forecast for Saipan and Tinian

TODAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY
Partly cloudy with a slight chance of showers. East winds 15 to 20 mph.	Mostly sunny with isolated showers. East winds 15 to 20 mph.	Partly cloudy with isolated showers.	Partly cloudy with isolated showers.	Partly cloudy with isolated showers.
▲88° ▼76°	▲87° ▼76°	▲87° ▼76°	▲87° ▼76°	▲87° ▼76°

Micronesia

Guam and Rota	Sunny	▲86 ▼77
Palau	Rain	▲85 ▼77
Yap	Rain	▲88 ▼77
Chuuk	Showers	▲88 ▼77
Pohnpei	Showers	▲86 ▼79
Kosrae	Rain	▲87 ▼81
Majuro	Showers	▲88 ▼79

Around The Globe

Auckland	Partly Sunny	▲68 ▼59
Beijing	Mostly Cloudy	▲72 ▼50
Hong Kong	Thundershowers	▲81 ▼73
Honolulu	Showers	▲77 ▼71
London	Showers	▲63 ▼52
Los Angeles	Mostly Sunny	▲70 ▼52
Manila	Cloudy	▲92 ▼78
Melbourne	Mostly Sunny	▲78 ▼61
Miami	Mostly Sunny	▲86 ▼72
New York	Mostly Cloudy	▲49 ▼42
Osaka	Rain	▲65 ▼54
Paris	Showers	▲62 ▼54
Pusan	Cloudy	▲71 ▼52
Rome	Sunny	▲70 ▼51
Salem	Partly Sunny	▲49 ▼34
San Francisco	Sunny	▲60 ▼45
Seoul	Mostly Sunny	▲75 ▼50
Tokyo	Showers	▲68 ▼56
Washington, DC	Rain	▲50 ▼44

Tides

Saipan Harbor	
4:44 AM Today	Low Tide: 1.2 Feet
9:26 AM Today	High Tide: 1.8 Feet
4:59 PM Today	Low Tide: 0.1 Feet

Sunrise/Sunset

Moonrise/Moonset

Today	6:04 AM	6:31 PM	Today	10:40 PM	9:09 AM
Wednesday	6:03 AM	6:31 PM	Wednesday	11:30 PM	10:00 AM
Thursday	6:02 AM	6:32 PM	Thursday		10:52 AM
Friday	6:02 AM	6:32 PM	Friday	12:17 AM	11:44 AM
Saturday	6:01 AM	6:32 PM	Saturday	1:00 AM	12:35 PM

GET YOUR PICTURES AND ANNOUNCEMENTS PUBLISHED—FOR FREE

The *Saipan Tribune* accepts for FREE publication the following:

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ISLAND SNAPSHTOS

Birthdays, baptisms, christenings, family gatherings, reunions, club activities, and other community-related events.

BIRTHDAY GREETINGS

A way for families and friends to greet their loved ones, accompanied by a picture of the person celebrating his/her birthday.

BUSINESS

Corporate donations, volunteer work, promotions, granting of awards, team-building exercises, meetings and other activities by members of the business community.

SAMUT SARI

Pictures from the islands' Filipino community, primarily focusing on Filipino activities, gatherings, get-togethers, volunteer work, etc.

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Pictures of off-island travels. Contributors may submit up to 10 pictures for consideration.

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COMMUNITY BRIEFS

Announcements of upcoming activities of organizations, community clubs, government agencies, and private companies.

CAMPUS BULLETIN

Announcements of upcoming activities in public and private schools, as well as calendar of activities. May include PTSA meetings, enrollment procedures.

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- Photos should be original and not copyrighted. Contributors must have the right to allow the *Saipan Tribune* to publish the pictures.
- Digital pictures should be high-resolution (minimum of 800kb).
- Must have complete details (who, what, where, when), the name of contact person, and phone number.
- Photos must have been taken in the last two months.
- For birthday greetings, must be submitted no later than 12 noon of the previous day to make it to next day's edition.

For announcements:

- Must have complete details (who, what, where, when),

the name of contact person, and a phone number.

- Must be submitted no later than 12 noon to make it to next day's edition.

HOW TO SUBMIT

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Editor's Note: Days: Monday (1), Tuesday (2), Wednesday (3), Thursday (4), Friday (5), Saturday (6) and Sunday (7); CO: Continental; FM: Shanghai Airlines; PR: Philippine Airlines; NW: Northwest; OZ: Asiana

ETD: Estimated Time of Departure; ETA: Estimated Time of Arrival. The *Saipan Tribune* is not responsible for any changes in the schedule.)

FREEDOM AIR FLIGHT SCHEDULE

Airline	ETD	ETA	Frequency	Airline	ETD	ETA	Frequency
Guam-Rota				FRE 113	11:40am	11:50am	Daily
FRE 100	7:00am	7:30am	Daily	FRE 115	1:00pm	1:10pm	Daily
Rota-Saipan				FRE 117	2:30pm	2:40pm	Daily
FRE 100	7:50am	8:20am	Daily	FRE 119	4:00pm	4:10pm	Daily
Saipan-Rota				FRE 121	4:40pm	4:50pm	Daily
FRE 200	9:00am	9:30am	Daily	FRE 123 *	5:40pm	5:50pm	Daily
Rota-Guam				FRE 125 *	6:00pm	6:10pm	Daily
FRE 200	9:50am	10:15am	Daily				
Guam-Rota							
FRE 300	4:00pm	4:30pm	Daily				
Rota-Saipan							
FRE 300	4:50pm	5:25pm	Daily				
Saipan-Rota							
FRE 400	6:00pm	6:30pm	Daily				
Rota-Guam							
FRE 400	6:45pm	7:15pm	Daily				
Saipan-Tinian							
FRE 101	6:45am	6:55am	Daily				
FRE 103	7:30am	7:40am	Daily				
FRE 105	8:00am	8:10am	Daily				
FRE 107	8:40am	8:50am	Daily				
FRE 109*	9:10am	9:20am	Daily				
FRE 111*	10:45am	10:55am	Daily				
Tinian-Saipan w/ connecting flights to Rota or Guam**							
FRE 102	7:05am	7:15am	Daily				
FRE 104	7:50am	8:00am	Daily				
FRE 106**	8:20am	8:30am	Daily				
FRE 108**	9:00am	9:10am	Daily				
FRE 110	10:00am	10:10am	Daily				
FRE 112	11:05am	11:15am	Daily				
FRE 114	12:00pm	12:10pm	Daily				
FRE 116	1:30pm	1:40pm	Daily				
FRE 118	2:50pm	3:00pm	Daily				
FRE 120**	4:20pm	4:30pm	Daily				
FRE 122**	5:00pm	5:10pm	Daily				
FRE 124	6:05pm	6:15pm	Daily				
FRE 126	6:20pm	6:30pm	Daily				

For news tips, corrections and requests for news coverage, call (670) 235-NEWS (6397), 235-2440, fax 235-3740. E-mail: editor@saipantribune.com. Website: www.saipantribune.com.

Business

Diabetics skimp on lifesaving care in recession

By LINDA A. JOHNSON
AP BUSINESS WRITER

Diabetics are increasingly risking life and limb by cutting back on—or even going without—doctor visits, insulin, medicines and blood-sugar testing as they lose income and health insurance in the recession, an Associated Press analysis has found.

Doctors have seen a drop in regular appointments with diabetic patients, if they come back at all. Patients more often seek tax-subsidized or charity care. And they end up in emergency rooms more often, patients and physicians said in interviews.

Sales of top-selling drugs and other products used to treat and monitor the disease have dropped since the economic crisis accelerated last fall, the AP analysis found. There are even signs that some patients are choosing less-expensive insulin injections over pricier pills to save money.

Meanwhile, the number of people with the disease keeps growing—another 1.6 million Americans were diagnosed in 2007 alone.

People with other health problems also are cutting back on care amid the recession, but diabetics who don't closely monitor and control the chronic disease risk particularly dire



AP In this March 9, 2009 photo, Eileen and Jeff Collins pose at their home in Indianapolis. Eileen Collins tried to scrimp on her medication last fall because she and her husband didn't have enough money to buy insurance after he lost his job.

complications: amputations, vision loss, stroke—even death.

Patients' frugality comes at a tremendous cost to the already-strained health care system. The typical monthly bill to treat diabetes runs \$350 to \$900 for those without insurance, a price tag that's risen as newer, more expensive medicines have hit the market. Emergency care and a short hospitalization can

easily top \$10,000, and long-term complications can cost far more.

M. Eileen Collins, 48, of Indianapolis, tried to scrimp on her medication last fall after her husband lost his job and with it their insurance. Without money for insulin, test supplies and other medicines, she asked for free samples and also got a few drugs through \$4-a-month ge-

neric programs. But she stopped taking most of her drugs and cut her insulin doses in half to stretch her budget.

"I truly did not think I was putting my life in danger," Collins said. "I thought if I was just real careful with what I ate ... I'd be all right."

By Thanksgiving eve, Collins was vomiting blood and rushed to a hospital. Doctors diagnosed

her as malnourished, anemic and in diabetic ketoacidosis, a life-threatening condition caused by lack of insulin and sky-high blood sugar. She spent a week in the hospital.

Her story is hardly unique.

Dr. Steven Edelman, a University of California, San Diego endocrinologist who runs a free clinic staffed by medical students, has seen a 30 percent surge the past six months in patients seeking free diabetes medicines and supplies, which the clinic has

to ration. Many had been solidly middle class, but the recession took

their jobs, insurance and even

some homes.

"A third to a half of these people haven't been taking their meds at all," said Edelman, who also founded the advocacy group Taking Control of Your Diabetes.

Diabetes occurs when the body doesn't make enough insulin or doesn't efficiently use the hormone, which helps turn sugar from food into energy.

The disease can be kept under control by monitoring blood sugar as well as exercising, improved diet, medications, testing and regular checkups.

Uncontrolled diabetes can cause fatigue, blurry vision,

ON THE NET:

<http://www.diabetes.org>
<http://www.tcoyd.org>

excessive urination, gum problems, infections and wounds that don't heal. Damage to the kidneys, liver, heart and eyes follow. Often, much of that damage isn't apparent until a stroke or heart attack strikes.

Sales of diabetes testing supplies and drugs indicate how many Americans have moved beyond scrimping and are cutting vital expenses. Several doctors said they began noticing a shift in August or September, when the financial markets melted down and layoffs accelerated.

Sales have dipped for pricey brand-name diabetes pills, blood glucose monitors and even test strips, based

on industry sales figures and interviews with the top two makers of testing supplies. The strips generally cost \$1 or more each; patients using insulin are supposed to test at least two to four times a day to be sure their blood sugar is in a safe range.

Most diabetics typically can control the disease for a few years with diet, exercise and pills available as cheap generics. But eventually, those pills stop working well, and patients switch to more advanced—and more expensive—medicines.

Texas is wind king, but Iowa breezes past Calif.

SIOUX FALLS, S.D. (AP)—Texas continues to blow away the competition, but Iowa can now generate more wind power than California, according to a new industry report to be released Monday.

The Lone Star state's 7,118 megawatts dwarfs Iowa's 2,791 megawatts and California's 2,517 megawatts, but wind power has grown into a key part of the energy infrastructure in Minnesota and Iowa, where each state generates more than 7 percent of their electricity from turbines, the American Wind Energy Association study said.

States are trying to lure wind

energy companies and the jobs that come with them, especially with new federal requirements that will require more power from alternative sources in coming years.

While jobs in the wind industry jumped by 70 percent to 85,000 last year, the association's chief executive warned that more must be done to prevent the industry from stalling.

"We need the right policies in place for our industry to maintain its momentum," said Denise Bode in a release.

The passage of a national Renewable Electricity Standard that would require utilities to

generate a quarter of their electricity from renewable energy by 2025 is vital to long-term growth, said Bode.

Global investment in alternative energy was cut in half during the first quarter of 2009, according to one study. Billions in investments have vanished with the recession.

Shares in wind, solar and geothermal companies took a pummeling from investors this year. Investments in companies devoted solely to clean energy fell to about \$100 million from \$2.1 billion, according to New Energy Finance, an industry-research firm.

Still, 2008 was a big year for the industry.

U.S. wind farms, with a combined capacity of 25,300 megawatts at the end of last year, should be able to generate some 73 billion kilowatt hours of power in 2009, enough to serve nearly 7 million homes, the association said.

The association estimates that 10 new manufacturing facilities started up in 2008, while 17 were expanded and 30 new plants were announced.

Indiana added its first utility-scale wind project. Michigan, Utah, New Hampshire and Wisconsin grew at the fastest clip.

Wen was supposed to attend with other regional leaders was canceled after anti-government protesters stormed the venue in Thailand.

At the summit, Wen had planned to announce a \$10 billion fund for investment in Asian infrastructure-building and offer \$15 billion in credit to Southeast Asian countries, Xinhua said, citing Foreign Minister Yang Jiechi.

Also Sunday, the People's Bank of China, the central bank, said in a statement it would ensure the financial system would

have sufficient liquidity for economic development. The bank said it would boost financing for the agriculture sector and small and medium-size enterprises. Citing improved investment, consumption and trade figures, Wen said some segments of the economy "are in a process of gradual recovery," Xinhua said.

That data were reported earlier, and the premier gave no forecast of first-quarter economic growth, which China is due to report in the next few days.

Some analysts see a recovery taking shape in China as the

4 trillion yuan (\$586 billion) stimulus boosts credit growth and demand for steel and other materials. But they caution that the indicators are tentative and show mostly the effect of government spending, while private consumption and investment are weaker.

China's economy is forecast to grow by at least 5 percent this year—the fastest rate of any major country, though down from last year's 9 percent and 13 percent in 2007. Chinese banks have avoided the turmoil that is battering Western financial systems.

"That's very serious demand destruction," said Victor Shum, an analyst with consultancy Perkin & Gertz in Singapore. "The macroeconomics don't look good at all for this year."

Oil prices have rallied from below \$35 a barrel in February, mirroring a jump in stock markets, as investors anticipate

SINGAPORE (AP)—Oil prices fell below \$52 a barrel Monday in Asia after the International Energy Agency said it expects global crude demand to drop this year amid the worst worldwide recession in decades.

Benchmark crude for May delivery fell 40 cents to \$51.84 a barrel by midday in Singapore in electronic trading on the New York Mercantile Exchange.

The contract on Thursday rose \$2.86 to settle at \$52.24 a barrel. Trading was closed on Friday for the Good Friday holiday.

The Paris-based IEA, an energy policy adviser comprised of 28 countries, said on Friday that demand this year will likely fall by 1 million barrels a day to 83.4 million barrels, or 2.8 percent lower than last year.

The IEA cited "a growing consensus that economic and oil demand recovery will be deferred to 2010."

"That's very serious demand destruction," said Victor Shum, an analyst with consultancy Perkin & Gertz in Singapore. "The macroeconomics don't look good at all for this year."

"OPEC compliance with the cuts remains quite high, but nobody, even in OPEC, expects prices to get to \$75 this year," Shum said. "In the longer-term, it will likely get there, but not this year."

massive global stimulus packages may spark a recovery in the second half.

"Investors have brushed aside near-term worries about the economy and oil demand," Shum said. "They're looking ahead to an eventual revival in the global economy."

Traders will be watching a slew of quarterly corporate results this week for signs the worst of the economic downturn is over. Banks such as Goldman Sachs Group Inc., Citigroup Inc. and JPMorgan Chase & Co. will report this week along with Intel Corp., Johnson & Johnson, Mattel Inc.

On Sunday, Iran's oil minister Gholam Hossein Nozari told state television that a price of between \$75 and \$80 dollars a barrel is desirable for both Tehran and oil consumers.

Iran is a member of the Organization of Petroleum Exporting Countries, which announced production cuts of 4.2 million barrels a day since September.

"OPEC compliance with the cuts remains quite high, but nobody, even in OPEC, expects prices to get to \$75 this year," Shum said. "In the longer-term, it will likely get there, but not this year."

Nation

ACROSS THE NATION

Family of Sunday school teacher stunned by arrest

TRACY, Calif. (AP)—Relatives of a Sunday school teacher arrested in the killing of an 8-year-old girl found stuffed into a suitcase said Sunday they are baffled by the accusations against the woman they know as a loving, single parent. "I just can't comprehend. There are no words," said Brian Lawless, the father of 28-year-old Melissa Huckabee, who is being held in San Joaquin County Jail on suspicion of kidnapping and killing Sandra Cantu. Lawless met with reporters outside Clover Road Baptist Church in Tracy, where the family held Easter services. The church is just down the road from the mobile home park where Sandra lived and was last seen.

Rain brings wildfire relief to North Texas, Okla.

STONEBURG, Texas (AP)—Rainstorms have drenched most of North Texas and parts of Oklahoma, helping firefighters contain several large blazes that have burned for days. Wildfires have burned more than 192,000 acres across North Texas. In a white-clapboard church spared by wildfires that ravaged rural Stoneburg last week, a pastor offered words of hope to his congregation on Easter Sunday. "It's devastating to see, but hope springs eternal," the Rev. Larry Kennedy told about 40 people, including some children in pink and green Easter dresses, at Stoneburg Baptist Church. Firefighters managed to save the church, which was built in the 1940s. The odor of burned debris lingered Sunday from the blackened fields and heaps of ashes and charred cars in town.

Faithful gather on Easter after deadly twisters

MENA, Ark. (AP)—Easter Sunday prayers were offered for victims of deadly storms that hit western Arkansas and the Southeast last week with signs of damage done by a tornado evident throughout St. Agnes Church. A stained-glass window gaped open in broken spots and rainwater leaked down the back of a display showing Christ being led to the cross. Even among the bread wafers offered for Holy Communion, a small twig stuck out—a remnant of the tornado Thursday night that blew through the Catholic parish and the rest of Mena, killing three people, injuring 30 more. Despite the devastation in the small community, Bishop Anthony Taylor said he had no reservations in proclaiming that "God is good."

In Phillips' hometown, 'elation' over his release

UNDERHILL, Vt. (AP)—In Capt. Richard Phillips' hometown, they'll never forget this Easter Sunday.

Five days after he was taken hostage by Somali pirates in an aborted hijacking, Phillips was freed in equally dramatic fashion, thrilling a community where yellow ribbons had sprung up like spring flowers in hopes that such symbols counted for something.

Perhaps they did, especially on a day when Christians celebrate the resurrection of Jesus Christ and reflect on symbols of new life.

"Elation," said Steve Barton, 51, summing up the mood as he looked out his front door at a yellow tissue-paper bouquet he'd fastened to a tree in his yard. "Our prayers were answered."

Phillips, a 53-year-old father of two known in his rural Vermont community as a dedicated family man, avid sportsman and serious skipper, won his freedom in a daring U.S. Navy Seals rescue in which three of his captors were killed but he escaped unharmed.

The good news traveled fast in Underhill, about 35 miles northwest of Montpelier, the state capital.

40 NH Christian center homes burn on Easter

ALTON BAY, N.H. (AP)—A massive fire damaged or destroyed dozens of wood-frame buildings, mostly unoccupied summer homes, at a 146-year-old Christian center on Easter.

The fire erupted at 4:30 p.m. on Sunday, when Christians were celebrating the resurrection of Jesus Christ. But the season hadn't begun yet at the Alton Bay Christian Conference Center on Lake Winnipesaukee, and state Fire Marshal William Degnan said no injuries to residents had been reported.

"Fortunately, it was at this time of year," he said. "During the summer, it's full."

It was cold and windy Sunday, and Degnan said strong gusts of up to 35 mph off the lake, the state's biggest, helped spread the flames through the many cottage-



Spokesperson Alison McColl delivers a statement on behalf of the Phillips family in front of their Underhill, Vt., home on Sunday, April 12, 2009. AP

A lawn sign on Route 15 that earlier read "Pray for Captain Phillips' release and safe return home" was revised in the afternoon to read, "Capt. Phillips rescued and safe."

Even before Maersk spokeswoman Alison McColl stepped out into bitter 22-degree cold to read a Phillips family statement in front of a horde of news reporters, camera people and microphones, everyone seemed to express a palpable sense of relief.

The good news traveled fast in Underhill, about 35 miles northwest of Montpelier, the state capital.

Witnesses said they watched as buildings burned to the ground in minutes.

"As I was looking across the bay, I could see 600 feet of flame lengthwise," John Lobdell told WMUR-TV in Manchester. "The whole entire camp ground looked like it was up in flames."

The center's approximately 140 cottages are close together in a network of narrow roads. Authorities said much of the area burned in the fire, which was brought under control around 8:30 p.m., had yet to be searched thoroughly as of late Sunday night.

One firefighter was hurt when a propane tank exploded; he was hospitalized in stable condition. Others were treated for smoke

inhalation or exhaustion.

The center's Web site says its purpose is to change lives in part by "encouraging commitment to Jesus." It says it tries to accomplish this through evangelism, encouragement of believers and equipping Christians to be effective leaders.

The center, founded in 1863, is on the southeastern corner of the lake. Besides cottages, it features a 70-room motel and a park for recreational vehicles.

The chairman of the center's safety organization, Russell Sample, was with Degnan as crews from numerous surrounding towns worked on the fire, whose cause hadn't been determined.

"A tremendous amount of history has been destroyed," Sample said.

Seven were taken to area hospitals, she said.

The Intracoastal Waterway runs along Florida's east coastline. Hill was not sure whether those on the Crownline boat were tossed into the water during the crash.

She said it doesn't appear anyone was aboard the 25-foot tug boat, which is registered to F&A Enterprises in St. Augustine.

The victims names have not been released.

The boat was carrying 12 people, according to Jeremy Robshaw of the St. Johns Coun-

"It's a celebration, instead of the reverse," said Melissa Akey, 42, of Williston, who heard the news when she stopped into a convenience store.

And the timing of it didn't escape notice.

"It couldn't happen on a better day—Easter," said Nickie Tinker, 36, a clerk at the Jolley's convenience store.

"It's great, news, especially on Easter," said Kim Jennings, 43, of Williston. "How terrific

is that? It could've ended completely differently. It's a world away. Who knows what they're thinking, and why they're holding someone hostage?"

Neighbors Terry and Sheila Aiken, who live across the street from the Phillips', fought back tears as they talked about him.

"I'm just so excited," said Mrs. Aiken, 62. "It's like it just changed the world back to the world."

Andreas Nolte, 48, of Jer-

icho, was out for a run when he heard.

"I'm really happy," said Nolte, who learned from a reporter after running past the Phillips' white farmhouse. "It's a happy day, especially since it's Easter."

Filling his vehicle with gas, Jeff St. John, 31, of Richford, said he didn't understand why it took so long for the U.S. military to free Phillips from the drifting lifeboat where four Somali pirates held him captive.

"They've got a whole ship full of people. I would've just taken the pirates out, right off," St. John said.

There was no second-guessing by the family, though.

Phillips' wife, Andrea Phillips, remained behind closed doors in the family's home after the news had broken.

McColl choked up as she stood in the street outside, reading the family's statement off a clipboard.

"The Phillips family wants to thank you all for your support and prayers. They have felt the caring and concern extended by the nation to their family. This is truly a very happy Easter for the Phillips family."

Obama girls name their new puppy 'Bo'

WASHINGTON (AP)—Bo? No jest. The first family has settled on a first pet—a 6-month-old Portuguese water dog that the Obama girls are naming Bo.

The selection was one of the White House's most tightly kept secrets.

President Barack Obama's daughters, 10-year-old Malia and 7-year-old Sasha, picked a black and white pup, a White House official speaking on the condition of anonymity told The Associated Press Saturday night.

The dog is a gift from Sen. Edward M. Kennedy, D-Mass., who owns several Portuguese water dogs himself.

"We couldn't be happier to see the joy that Bo is bringing to Malia and Sasha," Kennedy said in a statement. "We love our Portuguese water dogs and know that the girls—and their parents—will love theirs, too."



In this undated photo released by the White House, the Obama family's new dog, Bo, a 6-month-old Portuguese water dog, is shown at the White House in Washington. AP

Diddley. The name for the dog was an apparent reference to the singer "Bo" Diddley.

White House aides told the AP that the office of the first lady arranged an exclusive deal on the dog story with the Post.

Asia

Thai soldiers spray gunfire, tear gas at protest

BANGKOK (AP)—Thai soldiers sprayed automatic weapons fire into the air and threw tear gas to clear protesters blocking roads in the capital in the pre-dawn darkness Monday. Demonstrators responded by hurling at least one gasoline bomb and 70 people were reported injured, most by tear gas.

Despite a state of emergency that bans gatherings of more than five people, anti-government protesters were stationed at half a dozen points in Bangkok, including the prime minister's office, police said. Demonstrators used commandeered public buses to block several key intersections, and they set tires on fire.

Around Victory Monument, a major traffic circle in the capital, the protesters retreated slightly after soldiers move in at midday. Elsewhere, gunshots—possibly fired in warning by soldiers—were heard and troops turned water cannons on the demonstrators.

Monday's clashes marked a major escalation in the ongoing protests that have roiled this southeast Asian nation. The skirmish came a day after the country's ousted prime minister called for a revolution.

While the government has declared a state of emergency, protesters controlled many streets in the capital Bangkok.



An anti-government protester and supporter of ousted Prime Minister Thaksin Shinawatra waves a Thai flag after his colleagues set tires on fire during a protest at an intersection in Bangkok, Thailand, Monday, April 13, 2009.

They had earlier commandeered public buses and forced military vehicles to halt, in one case climbing on top of two armored personnel carriers, waving flags and shouting "Democracy."

A mob of the red-shirted protesters smashed cars carrying Prime Minister Abhisit Vejjajiva and his aides on Sunday. The secretary-general of Abhisit's office, Niphon Promphan, was dragged from the car and beaten, suffering head injuries and broken ribs.

The red-shirted demonstrators are supporters of ousted former Prime Minister Thaksin Shinawatra who want new elections, saying Abhisit's four-month-old government took power illegitimately. They also accuse the country's elite—the military, judiciary and other unelected officials—of undermining democracy by interfering in politics.

Parliament appointed Abhisit in December after a court ordered the removal of the previous pro-Thaksin government

citing fraud in the 2007 elections. Thaksin supporters took to the streets in protest, and their numbers grew to 100,000 in Bangkok last week.

Abhisit appealed to the demonstrators to return to their homes, saying the government was using "the softest measures possible" against them.

"All the work I am doing is not to create fear or put pressure or to harm any group of people. It's a step by step process to restore order and stop

violence," he said Monday on nationwide television.

Government spokesman Panitan Wattanayagorn said the "situation in Thailand is being brought back under control."

"In the next few hours, several security measures will be established ... to secure major ports, international airports and infrastructure," he said.

Monday's first clash began between 4 a.m. and 5 a.m., as troops in full combat gear advanced to disperse the protesters, who were occupying a major junction, according to witnesses.

The soldiers fired hundreds of rounds from their M-16 automatic rifles, with Associated Press reporters saying most appeared to have been aimed over the heads of the protesters. The reporters saw protesters throw at least one gasoline bomb which exploded behind the army line and tear gas floated across the eerie dawn scene.

At the nearby Century Park Hotel, foreign tourists were seen rushing into taxis and heading for Bangkok's international airport.

Dr. Chatri Charoenchivakul of the Erawan Emergency Coordination Center said at least 70 people were injured, most of them from tear gas, while two soldiers and two civilians suffered from gunshot wounds.

Militants torch trucks along US-NATO supply line

PESHAWAR, Pakistan (AP)—About 150 militants armed with rockets and automatic weapons attacked a transport terminal in northwestern Pakistan that lies along a key supply route used by U.S. and NATO troops, wounding three guards and torching eight cement trucks Sunday, police said.

Militants in Pakistan frequently attack cargo terminals and other stops used by vehicles taking supplies to Western troops in Afghanistan through the legendary Khyber Pass.

Scores of trucks have been damaged and several people

have died, adding urgency to U.S. efforts to find safer supply routes.

The latest attack started around 2 a.m. on the outskirts of the main northwestern city of Peshawar, local police officer Gharibullah Khan told The Associated Press.

"They fired rockets and used automatic weapons and torched at least eight trailers carrying cement," he said.

A gunbattle at the scene wounded three guards, one of whom was in critical condition, Khan said.

Also Sunday, a government

official said captors had freed Satish Anand, a renowned filmmaker kidnapped about six months ago in the southern city of Karachi, in Bannu, a district in Pakistan's northwest.

Kidnapping has increased in parts of Pakistan as the security situation has deteriorated. Some of the money from the criminal enterprise is believed to help fund the insurgency.

Anand is a member of Muslim-majority Pakistan's small Hindu community and the uncle of Juhi Chawla, a Bollywood actress and beauty

queen. He owns a large studio that makes feature films and TV soap operas.

Sharfuddin Memon, the head of the Citizens' Police Liaison Committee, would not say if a ransom was paid for the Saturday night release but

"The groups include both the extremists and the criminals," Memon told AP.

Philippine soldiers seize large amount of explosives

JOLO, Philippines (AP)—Marines and police have seized a large amount of explosives from the house of a man in the southern Philippines with alleged ties to al-Qaida-linked militants, thwarting possible bomb attacks, officials said Sunday.

Security forces raided the house on Jolo island Friday and found 14 bags of ammonium nitrate, a bag of potassium chlorate and more than 3,500 blasting caps, Jolo provincial police Chief Julasirim Kasim said. The owner of the house managed to escape, he said.

Ammonium nitrate is a fertilizer that can be turned into bombs. Potassium chlorate is a chemical compound used in making explosives and firecrackers.

The raid was part of a campaign to eliminate sources of weapons for the Abu Sayyaf, a Jolo-based group which has been included in a U.S. list of

terrorist organizations for its al-Qaida links and involvement in kidnappings, bombings and beheadings, Kasim said.

Navy spokesman Lt. Col. Edgard Arevalo said Nahrin Akmad, who owns the house, is suspected of supplying explosive materials to the Abu Sayyaf.

"The confiscation of the said explosive devices and components aborted the reported bombing operations that the bandits intend to conduct," Arevalo said in a statement.

Akmad is being hunted by police, Kasim said.

Jolo Gov. Abdusakur Tan declared a state of emergency in Jolo last month after Abu Sayyaf gunmen threatened to behead three kidnapped Red Cross workers. One of the hostages, a Filipino woman, has been freed but the two others—a Swiss and an Italian—remain in custody.

Sri Lanka suspends offensive for 2 days

Miliband welcomed the move and called on both sides to refrain from fighting.

The U.N. says that more than 100,000 people are trapped along with the cornered guerrillas in a government-declared "no-fire" zone measuring just 7.7 square miles (20 square kilometers).

It has said scores of civilians have been killed in the fighting.

The government and aid groups accuse the rebels of using civilians as human shields and have called for their release. The rebels and rights groups have accused the mili-

ASIAN BRIEFS

8 suspected militants arrested in Bangladesh

DHAKA, Bangladesh (AP)—Security officials arrested eight suspected militants of a banned Islamic group on Sunday after raiding a house in Bangladesh's capital. A.K. Azad, a spokesman for the elite Rapid Action Battalion, said the suspects are members of Jumatul Mujahideen Bangladesh. The group wants to establish Islamic law in the Muslim-majority nation, which is governed by secular laws. Azad said the men were being interrogated. At least three are believed to be members of the group's suicide squad, he said. The officials also recovered bomb-making materials, including explosive gel and detonators, he said, without elaborating.

Female official killed in southern Afghanistan

KANDAHAR, Afghanistan (AP)—A female provincial official known for fighting for women's rights was gunned down in southern Afghanistan on Sunday, following a day of fighting in the region that left 22 militants dead, officials said. A Taliban spokesman, Qari Yousef Ahmed, claimed responsibility for the attack. Gunmen killed Sitara Achakzai outside of her home in the city of Kandahar and then drove off, said Matiullah Khan Qateh, police chief of Kandahar province. He said the four men drove up on two motorcycles and shot Achakzai as she was getting out of her car. Achakzai, a dual German-Afghan citizen, spent the years of Taliban rule in Germany and returned to her native country to fight for women's rights, said Shahida Bibi, a member of the Kandahar women's association who worked with Achakzai.

Cambodia war survivors turn to music

SIEM REAP, Cambodia (AP)—By the walls of ancient temples, just as the morning sun dapples the jungle floor and birds sing, survivors of Cambodia's killing fields and minefields drop their crutches, put aside their artificial limbs or blindly grope for their instruments—and then play music that can break the heart. A tentative, mournful melody floats from a two-stringed "tro" bowed by Kak Vy, whose right leg is gone. He is joined by a zither plucked by Khieu Sarath, who lost his parents and sisters to Khmer Rouge murderers and whose mine-shattered leg was amputated without morphine. Phun Ath, blinded by a rocket, taps a drum softly. Now, the first tourists arrive at the wondrous temples of Angkor, and the 20 musicians—amputees, blind, scarred, all destitute—hope that by dusk their playing will have earned them enough to sustain their families for another day. Together, they support more than 100 children and wives.

World

Kidnapped US captain freed; snipers kill 3 pirates



In this photo released by the U.S. Navy, Maersk-Alabama Capt. Richard Phillips, right, shakes hands with Lt. Cmdr. David Fowler, executive officer of USS Bainbridge after being rescued by U.S. Naval Forces off the coast of Somalia on Sunday April 12, 2009.

By TODD PITMAN and LARA JAKES
ASSOCIATED PRESS WRITERS

NAIROBI, Kenya (AP)—Navy SEAL snipers on the fantail of a destroyer cut down three Somali pirates in a lifeboat and rescued an American sea captain on Easter Sunday. The surprise nighttime assault in choppy seas ended a five-day standoff between a team of rogue gunmen and the world's

most powerful military.

It was a stunning conclusion to an Indian Ocean odyssey that began when 53-year-old freighter Capt. Richard Phillips was taken hostage Wednesday by pirates who tried to hijack the U.S.-flagged Maersk Alabama. The Vermont native was held on a tiny lifeboat that began drifting precariously toward Somalia's anarchic, gun-plagued shores.

The operation, personally approved by President Barack Obama, quashed fears the saga could drag on for months and marked a victory for the U.S., which for days seemed powerless to resolve the crisis despite massing helicopter-equipped warships at the scene.

Negotiations with the three pirates were growing heated, Vice Adm. Bill Gortney said.

One of them pointed an AK-

47 at the back of Phillips, who was tied up and in "imminent danger" of being killed when the commander of the nearby USS Bainbridge made the split-second decision to order his men to shoot, Gortney said. Navy snipers took aim at the pirates' heads and shoulders, he said.

The lifeboat was about 25-30 yards away and was being towed by the Bainbridge at the time, he said. The pirates had agreed to the tow to move the powerless lifeboat out of rough water.

A fourth pirate surrendered after boarding the Bainbridge earlier in the day and could face life in a U.S. prison. He had been seeking medical attention for a wound to his hand and was negotiating with U.S. officials on conditions for Phillips' release, military officials said.

The rescue was a dramatic blow to the pirates who have preyed on international shipping and hold more than a dozen ships with about 230 foreign sailors. But it is unlikely to do much to quell the region's growing pirate threat, which has transformed one of the world's busiest shipping lanes into one of its most dangerous. It also risked provoking retaliatory attacks.

"This could escalate violence in this part of the world, no question about it," said Gortney, the commander of U.S. Naval Forces Central Command.

Military crackdown hasn't deterred Somali pirates

WASHINGTON (AP)—The U.S. military's moves to crack down on high seas piracy have done little to deter the epidemic of ship ransoms that preceded Sunday's Indian Ocean rescue, a top Navy official said Sunday.

Instead, pirates have merely headed elsewhere to avoid a growing armada of U.S. and international warships, said Vice Adm. Bill Gortney, commander of U.S. Naval Forces Central Command.

Despite heightened ocean crackdowns that led to criminal charges against 130 suspected pirates over the last three months, "it wasn't having an effect of drawing the number of attempts down," Gortney told reporters during a telephone conference call from Bahrain.

The latest example of the military's handling of the Somali pirate problem was the most dramatic. It ended Sunday with the rescue of Capt. Richard Phillips after Navy snipers fatally shot three Somalis who were holding him captive at gunpoint.

The 18-foot pirate boat was within 20 nautical miles of Somalia's coast when Navy SEALs opened fire, said a U.S.

military official with knowledge of the events. The pirates had tied up Phillips and were pointing an AK-47 assault rifle at his back, said a military official who spoke on condition of anonymity because he was not authorized to discuss the matter publicly.

Acting on authorization from the White House to take action in order to save Phillips' life, "the on-scene commander saw that the weapon was aimed at him (Phillips) and took it as that pirate was getting ready to use that weapon on him," Gortney said. "That would be my interpretation of imminent danger."

For months, the Navy has sought to prevent or disrupt scores of ship hijackings near the Gulf of Aden. More than 100 ships off the Horn of Africa came under siege in the past year.

But as the Navy began focusing on the Gulf of Aden and seeing results, Gortney said, the pirates shifted their activity south into the Indian Ocean. Over the past week, pirates commandeered at least seven new ships, including the Maersk Alabama.

Iraq's embattled Christians celebrate Easter

BAGHDAD (AP)—Iraq's embattled Christians took advantage of improved security and gathered Sunday to celebrate Easter, even as roadside bombings killed a U.S. soldier and wounded four other Americans in separate attacks north of Baghdad.

Tens of thousands of Christians have fled the country since the 2003 collapse of Saddam Hussein's regime and the rise of Islamic extremists such as al-Qaida in Iraq. Those who remained live in fear of kidnapping and assassination.

But with better security in Baghdad and many other cities, Christians turned out for Easter services Sunday, and priests offered prayers for an end to the violence.

"God protect us and rid our country of disputes and quarrels, let it be free of hatred and hostilities," Cardinal Emmanuel II Delly said during services in Baghdad's Mansour district, which were broadcast on state television.

About 500 Christians attended services at the Virgin Mary Church in the southern city of Basra, where Shiite militiamen ruled the streets until an Iraqi government offensive last year.

It was believed to be the largest attendance at the Basra church since 2003.

In the northern city of Mosul, where Sunni insurgents remain

Pope urges hope on Easter for end to war, poverty

VATICAN CITY (AP)—Pope Benedict XVI sought to give a message of hope on Easter Sunday to victims of wars, poverty and financial turmoil, saying it was urgently needed to overcome the miseries that are plaguing Africa, the Middle East and other parts of the globe.

Benedict delivered his "Urbi et Orbi" message—Latin for "to the city and the world"—after celebrating Easter Mass before tens of thousands of people who packed St. Peter's Square and the boulevard leading up to it.

On jumpy Lebanon-Israel frontier, a quiet drug war

ALONG THE ISRAEL-LEBANON BORDER, Israel (AP)—

Filmed with a night-vision camera just before Israeli narcotics officers pounced from nearby bushes, the video shows a Lebanese courier lobbing half-kilo packages of heroin over the border fence into Israel and an Israeli courier throwing back packages of \$100 bills.

Israeli soldiers and Hezbollah guerrillas have been battling for years along this frontier. But a quieter war goes on here every night, one between Inspector Gal Ben Ish's narcotics teams and the smugglers who have turned this jumpy border into

the main conduit for heroin bound for Israeli drug markets.

Police here believe the trade, worth hundreds of millions of dollars a year, is controlled in large part by Hezbollah, and call it "narco-terrorism."

In the nighttime bust caught on camera last September, Ben Ish's men netted 55 kilograms of heroin, 10 of hashish, \$650,000 in cash, and both drug mules. Hopes of repeating that success, and a sense that the smuggling here is more than just crime, have brought them back to this wooded hill in the middle of a biting Galilee night.

"We know that it's not just crim-

inal activity—here there's always the aspect of national defense. We're helping the country's security," said Ben Ish, whose black knitted cap hid a shaved head. He spoke as his men slipped batteries into night-vision goggles at headquarters ahead of the night's ambush, their four green-painted M-16s resting on a beat-up sofa.

Israeli police say Hezbollah, the dominant power in the towns and villages of south Lebanon, takes a cut of the trade and uses the money to fund operations and recruit agents inside Israel, one of them an Israeli army colonel now in jail for trading

old and new forms of poverty, of disturbing climate change, of violence and deprivation which force many to leave their homelands in search of a less precarious form of existence, of the ever-present threat of terrorism, of growing fears over the future, it is urgent to rediscover grounds for hope," he said.

In Jerusalem, the faithful celebrated Mass at the Church of

the Holy Sepulcher, traditionally believed to mark the site where Jesus was crucified, buried and then resurrected. Brown-robed friars marched into the church to the sound of bagpipes, followed by clergymen in purple capes and others bearing crosses.

And in the earthquake-ravaged central Italian city of L'Aquila, survivors gathered in makeshift chapels set up in tent cities that are housing some of the 55,000 people driven from

their homes by Monday's 6.3-magnitude tremor.

Information freely changes hands between guerrillas and smugglers, police say. The hard-to-see spots along the fence where Hezbollah ambushed and captured Israeli soldiers twice in the past decade were previously used as drop points for drugs.

To drive home the point that Israeli addicts and dealers are helping Hezbollah's war against their own country, a government anti-drug ad last year portrayed the group's leader, the bearded cleric Hassan Nasrallah, emerging grinning from a bong like a genie from a bottle.



Benedict XVI

secrets for drugs and cash.

Information freely changes hands between guerrillas and smugglers, police say. The hard-to-see spots along the fence where Hezbollah ambushed and captured Israeli soldiers twice in the past decade were previously used as drop points for drugs.

Israeli police say Hezbollah, the dominant power in the towns and villages of south Lebanon, takes a cut of the trade and uses the money to fund operations and recruit agents inside Israel, one of them an Israeli army colonel now in jail for trading

active, most Christians avoided public places such as parks and restaurants, preferring to celebrate the holiday at home.

Last year, thousands of Christians fled Mosul after a series of assassinations of Christians. Many of them sought refuge in mostly Christian villages outside the city, where people spent the afternoon in parks, restaurants and community social clubs.

George Matti, 65, from Mosul's eastern Zuhor neighborhood, attended Mass at the local church and then hurried home to his wife and five sons.

"We are asking Jesus to help our beloved Iraq and to help all Christians inside and outside Iraq to return to their homes," said Matti, who urged authorities to fulfill their promise to secure the city, 225 miles (360 kilometers) north of Baghdad.

American troops also attended sunrise services at U.S. bases across the country. About 100 soldiers sang hymns and listened to a military band at services at Camp Liberty on the western edge of Baghdad.

Christians made up about 3 percent of Iraq's 26 million people when the war began in 2003. The exact number of Christians remaining in Iraq is unclear but estimates put the figure at several hundred thousand.

Overdrive

2009 MAZDA MX-5 MIATA SPORT

In the roadster tradition

By WARREN BROWN
(C) 2009, THE WASHINGTON POST

Sometimes, you have to escape—or at least give it a darned good try.

I flipped the latch anchoring the hardtop, power retractable roof of the 2009 Mazda MX-5

Miata Sport roadster. I pushed a button. The roof rose and slid backwards, exposing me and the Miata Sport's cabin to the full glory of a young spring day.

I was going nowhere in particular, which is the kind of driving you do in tiny, two-seat roadsters. Their only excuse for

being, when you get down to it, is driving for the sake of driving—the kind of driving some people might find wasteful in these hard times, but the kind of motorized tonic that is necessary to quench the souls of people who believe that somewhere, somehow, even in all

THE WASHINGTON POST
The 2009 Mazda MX-5 Miata Sport is a joy machine, an escape pod.



operated soft top or a power retractable hard top. There are 12 iterations of the car, too many to delineate here.

ENGINE/TRANSMISSION

All 12 versions have a 2-liter, 16-valve, inline four-cylinder engine. In the Miata Sport with a six-speed manual transmission, the engine develops 167 horsepower at 7,000 revolutions per minute and 140 foot-pounds of torque at 5,000 rpm.

CAPACITIES

There are seats for two people. Luggage capacity is 5.3 cubic inches. The fuel tank holds 12.7 gallons of recommended "for best performance" premium unleaded gasoline.

MILEAGE

I averaged 26 miles per gallon in highway driving. It seems to me that a car this small should deliver better

mileage than that.

SAFETY

Standard equipment includes ventilated front disc brakes and solid rear disc brakes with anti-lock protection. Electronic stability and traction control were not available at this writing.

PRICING

The base price on the 2009 Mazda Miata MX5 Sport roadster is \$25,390. Dealer's invoice price on that model is \$23,461. Price as tested is \$26,060, including a \$670 transportation charge. Dealer's price as tested is \$24,131. Prices are sourced from Mazda, Edmunds.com, and Cars.com, an affiliate of The Washington Post.

PURSE-STRING NOTES

A fun ride. Compare with the Pontiac Solstice and Saturn Sky.

of this economic mess, there remains something akin to the romance of the road.

I found it on a stretch through Virginia Shenandoah's Valley, on one of those roads with two opposing lanes winding past farms that seemed to show some signs of economic, or, at least, culinary viability.

The Miata Sport, a rear-wheel drive in the long tradition of sports cars, has a small 2-liter, inline 4-cylinder engine. But it makes 167 horsepower, quite decent oomph for a car weighing 2,562 pounds.

The fun-to-drive part—the control-freak aspect—comes in the six-speed manual gearbox. You really have to work it in rhythm with the clutch, especially

on dip-and-curve rural roads, to keep the Miata Sport going without stalling or sputtering. It becomes a self-involved contest that is also liberating.

Noise is a factor, as it is in most roadsters. And that's noise top-up or top-down. The small engine emits a bee buzz, especially at higher revolutions. And that retractable hardtop, albeit beautifully designed and engineered, has a tympanic quality when raised and when the Miata Sport is rolling over rough roads.

When the Miata was introduced in 1989, it was marketed as the roadster with a smile—a happy-faced car that critics and supporters alike said appealed more to women than to men.

Now, Mazda's designers have given the little car a grille of wider mouth. It is a more aggressive face that looks masculine but also a bit silly. It doesn't matter. The fun-to-drive factor remains, and it is enhanced by the styling, engineering and ease of operation of the convertible hardtop.

Throughout the car's history, people have complained that the Miata is not one of the fastest or most powerful sports cars on the road. They are right. It was never meant to be, although there are legions of Miata owners, those devotees of weekend Miata track racing, who beg to differ.

But both arguments miss the point.

NUTS & BOLTS

By WARREN BROWN
(C) 2009, THE WASHINGTON POST

COMPLAINTS

The Miata Sport can be a bit of a buzz machine at highway speeds. Also, for a small car, especially a small car with a six-speed manual transmission, its fuel-efficiency is less than impressive.

RIDE, ACCELERATION AND HANDLING

It gets good marks in all three categories. The car is fun to drive.

HEAD-TURNING QUOTIENT

It's still cute. It draws smiles in a world of frowns.

BODY STYLE/ LAYOUT

The MX-5 Miata is a front-engine, rear-wheel-drive roadster available with a manually

By WARREN BROWN
(C) 2009, THE WASHINGTON POST

NEW YORK—As I was stuck in traffic with the taxi meter running, the absurdity struck me. I am here to cover an automobile show in a city so stuffed with cars their numbers negate the reason for their existence.

They weren't going anywhere—at least, not quickly. I boarded a cab on East 87th Street near Park Avenue. That was 10 minutes ago, and we had been sitting on Park Avenue ever since.

It's crazy. What am I doing? What are we doing?

Nearly 35 minutes and \$20 later, at the billowy IAC Building—a structure reminiscent of wind-blown sails on the open sea—I put the question to William J. Mitchell, an urban design specialist who is a professor of architecture and media arts at the Massachusetts Institute of Technology.

Mitchell's isn't the kind of interview normally sought at automotive exhibits. But he was here one day before news media previews of the

2009 New York International Auto Show to discuss something called PUMA, which translates to Personal Urban Mobility and Accessibility.

PUMA is a joint project between Segway—the New Hampshire company that makes those battery-powered, stand-up scooters used by postal delivery people and police on the beat—and General Motors.

Mitchell is an adviser to the joint venture. He laughs when I relate to him my ordeal moving east to west by cab in Manhattan.

The success of the automobile, as we have come to know, love and loathe it, has been defeated by the success of the automobile, Mitchell said. Put another way, as the car and its many oversized, motorized siblings exist today, "it no longer fits comfortably in the urban environment," he said.

Segway and GM, working together over the past two years, have come up with what they think is a solution—a two-seat, lithium-battery-powered, two-



AP
Mike Gansler, Director of Core Technology with Segway Inc., sits in a Personal Urban Mobility and Accessibility, or PUMA, project prototype vehicle in New York's Times Square on Sunday, April 5, 2009.

wheeled, 300-pound transportation pod capable of reaching 35 miles per hour and going 35 miles between charges.

There's something else: The PUMA pod would be equipped with transponders to help it behave much in the manner of pedestrians on crowded New York streets—they seem to automatically sense one another's space and avoid intrusion or collision.

"What we want to do is have people have the freedom to go

where they want when they want in the city without all of the side effects we've experienced over the years," said Larry Burns, GM's vice president of research and development and strategic planning.

That would be "side effects" such as congestion, noise and air pollution. The proposed PUMA pod, which could become a marketable reality in a few years, according to Burns, would have none of those undesirable byproducts.

It seems a pipe dream, one that drew more than its share of cynics and critics here, especially among the automotive

media—a varied collection of newspaper and magazine journalists, bloggers and tweeters, and mini-camera photographers who had descended on this city's Javits Convention Center to record for posterity all things they consider important in developments of automotive horsepower and glamour.

Among that group, the PUMA pod frequently was dismissed as a gimmick, or "not a real car," or something that, as one young scribe put it, "only a geek would buy."

But I demur.

After going nowhere quickly in a Yellow Cab, after watching cars clumped together on city streets, rendering them nearly impassable, it dawned on me that maybe the traditional automobile has reached the end of the road.

Traffic that does not move is not traffic, no matter how much horsepower or what manner of sports car or luxury automobile is contained therein. The PUMA pod, initially expected to be sold to test-bed communities, such as college campuses, just might be the way to go.

Life & Style

'I was chilled to the bone'

By AUDRA ANG
THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

BEIJING (AP)—Twenty years after China's military crushed dissent around Tiananmen Square, the details are still fresh in Qi Zhiyong's mind. The acrid smell of tear gas. The people run down by tanks. The dizzying pain when a bullet tore through his left leg.

The student-led protests in the heart of the Chinese capital had gone on for weeks, an extraordinary call for political freedom and an end to government corruption. Sparked by the April 15 death of a beloved Communist Party chief deposed by hard-liners, they were mostly peaceful, even after martial law was declared on May 20.

But late on June 3, 1989, the government lost its patience.

"I saw people being run over. Blood sprayed everywhere," says Qi, then a 33-year-old construction worker. "The tanks kept moving, as if the people weren't there. My hair stood on end. I was chilled to the bone."

Witnessing the crackdown and losing his leg transformed Qi from a loyal Communist Party supporter into an activist with a simple goal: speaking out about the events which the leadership has all but erased from history.

His efforts cost him his job, his wife and his freedom. But a newfound Christian faith and pure doggedness have kept him going.

"The young generation, they eat hamburgers and wear famous brands. But when June 4 is mentioned, they only have a very vague understanding of what happened," Qi says. "Democracy is for all the people, and we need to talk to people and bring the idea to them."

The government has never offered a full accounting and has made virtually all public discussion taboo. It says its suppression of "counterrevolutionary" riots preserved social stability and paved the way for economic success.

"The Communist Party claims to be the savior of people and the most glorious thing in this world. It says it loves the people and cares about human rights," Qi says. "But it opened fire on people and 20 years later, it still hasn't admitted it."

Those who break the silence are shut down by authorities. Zhang Shijun, a former soldier who took part in the 1989 crackdown and called for a reassessment of the bloodshed, was detained last month after giving an interview to The Associated Press. His status is unknown.

Over the years, Qi, a handsome, square-jawed man who walks with the help of metal crutches, has given interviews to foreign media and overseas rights groups. He has been detained many times. Security agents follow him and keep watch over the 135-square-foot (12.6-square-meter) home he shares with his second wife, their 12-year-old daughter and another family in southwest Beijing.

"Many people who have been persecuted since 1989 have tried to speak up, but Mr. Qi is one of the most persistent," says Renee Xia, international director of the rights group Chinese Human Rights Defenders. "He not

Tiananmen 20 years later: A survivor's story



Qi Zhiyong, with crutches, walks on a street in Beijing, where he was shot by Chinese troops 20 years ago, Tuesday, Feb. 10, 2009. AP

only tries to get justice for his own loss, but speaks up for others. ... For this, authorities have targeted him for harassment and retaliation."

Qi says he and his family are forced by state security to leave the capital during sensitive periods such as last year's Beijing Olympics, when the government wanted to showcase only the country's good side. Last month, Qi says, his freedom was already being restricted ahead of the 20th anniversary of the Tiananmen protests. Security agents warned: "Behave yourself. ... Sooner or later, you will be imprisoned this year, even if you are disabled."

Right after his leg was amputated, Qi says, he often wore shorts to show

purpose of our lives," he says.

Of average height and build, he radiates the presence of a bigger man. His tale unfolds between sips of green tea and puffs of cigarettes.

He is an avid storyteller, pausing for drama in some places, adding sound effects in others. "Dongdong," he says, imitating the dull clang of tear gas canisters hitting the ground in 1989. "Tatatatatata," he spits for the sound of gunfire.

His voice is deep, the words drawn out. At one point, he breaks down in tears.

The demonstrations began when students put up posters praising deposed chief Hu Yaobang and indirectly criticizing the hard-liners who forced his resignation. Thousands marched in Bei-

ning and smelled tear gas.

He saw two male students carrying an injured female student, who screamed in pain. People on bicycles delivered messages to the demonstrators about tanks and armored carriers moving toward the square.

Around 11 p.m., Qi says, he followed his co-workers back to Tiananmen to see the 33-foot-tall "Goddess of Democracy," a Statue of Liberty lookalike unveiled days before by the protesters.

The scene had changed.

Tents, which had housed thousands of protesters for weeks, were empty or had collapsed. A young man rode up on a bike, his body covered in blood, saying that soldiers had opened fire

'I saw people being run over. Blood sprayed everywhere. The tanks kept moving, as if the people weren't there. My hair stood on end. I was chilled to the bone.'

off his scars and told his story to anyone who asked. He says his state-run company, which laid him off because of his injury, offered him 100,000 yuan (\$27,000 in 1989) in exchange for his silence on how he lost his leg—a proposition he refused.

"I told them I would tell this story for the rest of my life. This is not just my own story. I would be mad if I took that offer," Qi says. "I have a responsibility to this nation, to this world."

Qi, the son of a worker at a money printing factory, grew up in Beijing and completed middle school, where he bought into the Communist line. "The party was the sole thought and

Jing and Shanghai shouting, "Long live Hu Yaobang! Long live democracy!"

Within days, tens of thousands of students surged past police lines and filled Tiananmen Square. The protests soon spread to other cities.

In mid-May, students began a hunger strike at Tiananmen, forcing the government to move a welcoming ceremony for visiting Soviet President Mikhail S. Gorbachev to the airport. The numbers in the square and surrounding streets—including workers and farmers—swelled to several points to 1 million.

The afternoon of June 3, Qi was riding his bicycle to work south of Tiananmen Square when he saw people run-

ning and killed people in the Muxidi district, west of Tiananmen.

Qi, nervous and suddenly cold, said he wanted to go home, but his friends were intent on seeing the statue.

"I realized there were soldiers all around, with rifles, helmets and dark glasses," Qi says. "I was frightened because I had seen such scenes only on TV, in movies about German fascists."

The tanks were moving down the Avenue of Eternal Peace, Beijing's main thoroughfare, flattening guardrails "like they were noodles," Qi says. Qi ran through a warren of alleyways near the square, trying to find somewhere to hide. Riot police wearing helmets and

boots and carrying shields as tall as a man marched in groups.

Near the Zhongnanhai compound, where China's leaders live and work, Qi saw squads of soldiers standing guard. In a macabre dance, the unarmed men in the front row crouched, the ones in the back fired their rifles and the front row popped back up.

A truck covered with canvas came into view. Soldiers, their sweat-soaked uniforms a deep green, jumped off the truck and advanced three in a row. People fled in terror down an alleyway.

"The next thing I saw was people falling one after another. Then I fell," Qi says, grimacing as he recalled the dizziness and pain of being shot. "Help me! I shouted."

He describes how he pushed aside the person who had fallen on him as blood from his left leg stained his red shorts and pooled on the ground. The screams of other people were loud in his ears.

"I don't remember what I was thinking about. The whole world seemed like it had disappeared," he says. "Even as I used my hand to cover the wound, I thought to myself, 'It's all over.'"

A passer-by bound Qi's wound with his white shirt while a woman broke the wooden door off her home for use as a stretcher. "Hey, you're handsome! Are you married?" Qi recalls the woman joking, apparently trying to distract him from the pain.

When they got to the nearest hospital a few miles (kilometers) away, it was shut. An old man who answered the door said they had been ordered to close the day before.

At another rescue center, harried doctors turned him away.

Qi finally was put onto a small bus going to the Xuanwu hospital, which he reached five hours after he was shot. Volunteers began moving him to the mortuary when they saw the extent of his injury. "I'm not dead yet!" Qi shouted.

In a blood-spattered surgery room, doctors worked for hours. His leg was amputated first up to his knee, then halfway up his thigh 10 days later.

Now, his family survives off the monthly 340 yuan (\$50) his old construction company sends him and the 800 yuan (\$120) his wife makes working part-time. He says he has high blood pressure, diabetes and heart problems.

He has found God in a country run by an officially atheist government. He peppers his speech with "Amen!" and "praise God!" and attends Catholic services at an underground church.

"I want to thank the Communist Party. Because at the beginning I trusted them. ... Then I was shot, my leg was amputated and a new me was born," says Qi. "I've cleaned my mind of those old Maoist thoughts."

There are days Qi says he feels like his leg is still there, whether it's an itch or an ache. On a recent trip to Tiananmen Square, he is pensive. A few Chinese tourists pose for pictures.

He stares out the window, his eyes sad as he thinks of the upcoming anniversary.

"Although today is a good day, tomorrow might be cloudy," Qi says. "I've started to feel the pain in my leg again."

Swiss architect Zumthor wins Pritzker

By JACOB ADELMAN
ASSOCIATED PRESS WRITER

LOS ANGELES (AP)—Peter Zumthor, a Swiss architect acclaimed for the ambitious craftsmanship he applies to works of modest scale in often remote locations, has won the 2009 Pritzker Architecture Prize, the prize's jury announced Sunday.

Zumthor joins Jean Nouvel, Frank Gehry and Zaha Hadid in receiving the top honor in the field in recognition of his varied works, which include chapels, museums, senior housing and a hot spring complex.

The Pritzker jury of architects, academics, writers and designers praised Zumthor in their citation for his timeless structures that feed off the cultures in which they were built and show respect for their surroundings.

"His buildings have a commanding presence ... showing us again and again that modesty in approach and boldness in overall result are not mutually exclusive," the jurors wrote. "Humility resides alongside strength."

Zumthor, 65, stands in contrast with the headline-grabbing "starchitects" who travel the world planning high-profile projects in major metropolises.

He maintains a small staff in his studio in the small Swiss town of Haldenstein, often turning down commissions and seeing his projects through from conception to completion.

"I'm an architect who works on the whole building himself," Zumthor told The Associated Press by cell phone from an Alpine hillside where he was planning the vegetable gardens for a pair of wooden houses he built.

"I hope this prize could give a lot of hope to young guys: they say 'Zumthor is doing it, so we should be able to do this also, to do the whole building, not just deliver images or facades,'" he said.

Among the dozens of projects men-



This April 10, 2009 file picture shows the twin house Raeth built by Swiss architect Peter Zumthor in 1983, in Haldenstein, Canton of Grisons.

ON THE NET

Pritzker: <http://www.pritzkerprize.com/>

tioned by the Pritzker jury were the Kolumba Museum in Cologne, Germany, a modern building set in the ruins of a late gothic church destroyed in World War II, and the Thermal Baths in Vals, Switzerland, a maze of pools enclosed by concrete and stone mined from the surrounding hills.

"When you are there, it is extraordinary how this monumental stone work just dissolves in the pleasure of its many surprises," architect and Rice University architecture professor Carlos Jimenez, a Pritzker juror, said of the baths.

"We are in a time of economic turmoil, and I think Zumthor's work reminds us that there is a luxury in architecture that



May 16, 2000 file picture shows Swiss architect Peter Zumthor working in his office in Haldenstein, Canton of Grisons, Switzerland.

Graves performed three of the same songs Anderson sang 70 years ago: "America (My Country, 'Tis of Thee)," "O, Mio Fernando" and "Ave Maria."

Wearing one of Anderson's old dresses, Graves called her predecessor "one of my greatest heroes."

"It is the honor of my life and my career to be celebrating this day of freedom with you," she told the audience.

She joked that when she looked over Anderson's performance list and saw "O, Mio Fernando" she thought "my God she sang that song; that's really hard."

Former Secretary of State Colin Powell recited excerpts from President Abraham Lincoln's second inaugural address. Afterward he remarked on Lincoln's famous call to heal the nation's wounds after the Civil War, "with malice toward none, with charity for all," telling the audience they should aspire to those words.

The Chicago Children's Choir, women's a cappella group Sweet Honey in the Rock and the U.S. Marine Band also performed at the concert.

Introducing a number called "Would You Harbor Me," a member of Sweet Honey in the Rock said the song was "written because this country has been a harbinger to so many, but at the same time it has rejected so many."

Those words highlight Anderson's own story. She grew up in poverty

in South Philadelphia, but became famous in the 1930s, performing for royalty and in major concert halls in Europe, New York and Philadelphia.

When her manager tried to book Anderson at Constitution Hall, the largest venue in segregated Washington at the time, she was rejected by the Daughters of the American Revolution, which owned the hall and prohibited African Americans from performing there. The district's school board also turned her away from singing at a school's auditorium.

"To me, it's just very dramatic," said Josephine Pesaresi, 75, the daughter of Justice Hugo Black, who attended the 1939 event. "People are younger, they don't realize what huge things have happened and how far we have come. It makes me weep, I'm so happy."

Pesaresi, who sat near the stage at Sunday's concert, said in an interview Saturday that the anniversary made her recall how her father had grown in his racial outlook.

Black, once a member of the Ku Klux Klan, later joined an unanimous Supreme Court in outlawing segregation in public schools in 1954 and often voted with the court's liberal wing on civil rights cases.

"He and my mother went to that concert, because he so firmly believed in equality," she said.

Sunday was a time to reflect "where we were then, where we are now, and

can be found that has nothing to do with extravagant budgets and extravagant formal gestures," Jimenez said.

Eric Owen Moss, director of the Southern California Institute of Architecture, said Zumthor's work was an exemplar of scaled-down architecture that seeks to capture essential formal truths, much like Piet Mondrian and other earlier 20th century modernist artists.

"He's pursued something that probably goes back to people like Mondrian, the sense that you might get to the truth of the matter if you could get back to the essence of the matter," Moss said.

Zumthor was born the son of a cabinet maker in Basel, Switzerland. He trained for five years as a cabinet maker before beginning his university studies that included time at New York's Pratt Institute.

In 1979, after working as a building and planning consultant for the eastern Swiss state of Graubunden, he established his own practice in Haldenstein, where he still works with a staff of 15.

Zumthor received the Praemium Imperiale from the Japan Art Association in 2008 and the University of Virginia's Thomas Jefferson Foundation Medal in Architecture in 2006.

He became the second Pritzker laureate to be chosen from Switzerland after Jacques Herzog and Pierre de Meuron, who shared the prize in 2001.

A formal ceremony will be held in May in Buenos Aires, Argentina. Zumthor will receive a \$100,000 grant and a bronze medallion.

Despite the accolades, Zumthor said he aims to create buildings that become part of everyday life so that even people who don't consider their architectural merit can enjoy them.

"A lot of people come back to me and say 'I like to come back to your buildings and the more I look at them, the more I like them,'" he said. "I always had a hard time to deal with praise. But of course it's nice and it keeps you going."

how far we have to go," said Raymond Arsenault, who has written a book on Anderson's concert and has consulted with the Abraham Lincoln Bicentennial Commission. The commission and the National Park Service are sponsoring the event.

According to Arsenault, the 1939 event wasn't just a concert. "It was this sort of crack in the mold; it just showed people this alternative vision of what America might be like if it lived up to its goals of liberty."

Seventy-year anniversaries ceremonies aren't that common, but the Bicentennial Commission decided to hold the concert this year because it coincided with the 200th anniversary of Lincoln's birthday. Organizers view Anderson's concert as a major step in the advancement of civil rights that Lincoln helped inspire.

The anniversary performance also occurs within the first 100 days of Barack Obama's presidency.

Following the hour-long performance about 200 people were sworn in as U.S. citizens, symbolizing the rights all Americans are guaranteed.

Before the swearing in, Powell talked about his parents' immigration to the United States from Jamaica.

"It wasn't a perfect place, as we have witnessed here with this celebration," he said. "But it was a place that just kept getting better and better and better."

Concert pays tribute to Marian Anderson



In this April 9, 1939 file photo, contralto singer Marian Anderson performs on the steps of Washington's Lincoln Memorial on Easter Sunday after she had been refused permission to perform in Washington's Constitution Hall by the hall's owners, the Daughters of the American Revolution.

WASHINGTON (AP)—More than 2,000 people gathered Sunday at the Lincoln Memorial for a concert honoring the 70th anniversary of Marian Anderson's historic performance there in 1939.

Because of the color of her skin, Anderson was denied the opportunity

to perform at nearby Constitution Hall and local high school. So, instead, the opera singer sang on the steps of the Lincoln Memorial in April 1939 to a 75,000-person crowd of blacks and whites standing together.

In the Sunday afternoon sunshine, African-American opera star Denyce

Miley and Hannah team up for \$34M opening weekend

LOS ANGELES (AP)—Miley Cyrus and alter-ego Hannah Montana have double-teamed their way to another No. 1 box office debut.

Walt Disney's "Hannah Montana: The Movie" opened with \$34 million in ticket sales, according to studio estimates Sunday. That followed Cyrus' first-place premiere last year with her 3-D concert film.

The movie is a big-screen installment of the Disney Channel series about an ordinary teen living a double life as pop star Hannah.

"Hannah Montana" drew \$17.3 million on Friday for the biggest opening day ever for a G-rated live-action movie.

While girls 12 and younger and their moms made up most of the audience, "Hannah Mon-

tana" also attracted a solid crowd of teenage girls, fans reaching the age when they might be outgrowing the show, said Mark Zoradi, president of Disney's motion-picture group.

"Miley's audience stayed with her," Zoradi said. "Those that enjoyed the show on TV and maybe have become young teens themselves came back for the movie."

The previous weekend's box office champ, "Fast & Furious," fell to second place with \$28.8 million. The street-racing thriller raised its domestic take to \$118 million, and distributor Universal said its worldwide total has topped \$200 million.

Seth Rogen's "Observe and Report" opened at No. 4 with \$11.1 million, a fair but unremarkable debut for the Warner

1. **"Hannah Montana: The Movie,"** \$34 million.
2. **"Fast & Furious,"** \$28.8 million.
3. **"Monsters vs. Aliens,"** \$22.6 million.
4. **"Observe and Report,"** \$11.1 million.
5. **"Knowing,"** \$6.7 million.
6. **"I Love You, Man,"** \$6.4 million.
7. **"The Haunting in Connecticut,"** \$5.7 million.
8. **"Dragonball: Evolution,"** \$4.7 million.
9. **"Adventureland,"** \$3.4 million.
10. **"Duplicit,"** \$3 million.

Bros. comedy about an emotionally unstable mall cop trying to catch a flasher and gain entry to the police academy.

It was a slightly better

opening for Rogen than last fall's "Zack and Miri Make a Porno" (\$10.1 million) but far below the \$20 million and \$30 million debuts of his previous comedies "Knocked Up" and "Pineapple Express."

"Observe and Report" was a tougher sell, with Rogen dropping his lovable teddy-bear persona to take on an unsympathetic character.

"This was a little bit darker," said Jeff Goldstein, general sales manager for Warner Bros. "A little older, and a little bit more big city."

The weekend's other new wide release, 20th Century Fox's fantasy adventure "Dragonball: Evolution," debuted at No. 8 with \$4.7 million.

Hollywood extended its box office hot streak as overall receipts totaled about \$142 million, up 50 percent from the same weekend last year, when "Prom Night" led with \$20.8 million.

Revenues this year are at \$2.76 billion, up 16.7 percent from 2008's, according to box office tracker Media By Numbers. Accounting for 2009's higher ticket prices, movie attendance is running 15 percent ahead of last year's.

At just 16, Cyrus already has an enviable box office history as she moves from TV to the big screen. "Hannah Montana & Miley Cyrus: Best of Both Worlds Concert" put in a \$31.1



AP
Singer Miley Cyrus performs on ABC's 'Good Morning America', Wednesday, April 8, 2009, in New York.

million debut, while her animated comedy "Bolt" opened with \$26.2 million last fall and became a \$100 million hit.

"Her average opening weekend is around \$30 million," said Paul Dergarabedian, president of Media By Numbers LLC. Final figures will be released Monday.

a 16-year-old. Her opening-weekend average rivals stars twice her age."

Estimated ticket sales for Friday through Sunday at U.S. and Canadian theaters, according to Media By Numbers LLC. Final figures will be released Monday.

Fox's Glenn Beck announces comedy tour

NEW YORK (AP)—Glenn Beck, Fox News Channel's latest sensation, is taking a comedy show on the road for six live performances over six days during the first week of June.

Beck calls his act a "poor man's Seinfeld" and intends to mix topical humor with his modern-day re-imagining of Thomas Paine's 1776 pamphlet "Common Sense."

The radio and TV talk show host will start June 1 in Denver, then perform in theaters in Phoenix, San Diego, Kansas City, Houston and Richmond, Va., over the next five days, he said. The Kansas City show on June 4 will air as a live simulcast in select theaters across the country and as a recorded broadcast in theaters a week later, a spokesman for Beck said.

Beck has done such live performances in the past, most recently during the downtime between his departure from CNN's HLN network and joining Fox's schedule in January.

His profile has increased exponentially since

then, with his 5 p.m. show nearly doubling Fox's ratings in the time slot. He's become a favorite target for Comedy Central's Stephen Colbert to lampoon, and been criticized by liberals for over-the-top criticisms of President Barack Obama.

"I couldn't have guessed this success at Fox," Beck said. "We would never have put money down on the table that we would have had this kind of success."

Since he began doing live performances in 2004, Beck has appeared before more than 100,000 fans.

The live shows give him the chance to see first-hand what sort of themes are resonating among his regular followers, Beck said. For the first time during his most recent tour, there seemed to be no regional differences in the

concerns that his fans expressed, he said.

"I learn something from the audience," he said. "I know my thoughts but I can see their reaction to things."



AP
This March 12, 2003 file photo shows syndicated radio host Glenn Beck after recording promotional announcements in his Bala Cynwyd, Pa. studio.

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Observe And Report

Synopsis

At the Forest Ridge Mall, head of security Ronnie Barnhardt patrols his jurisdiction with an iron fist. The master of his domain, he combats skateboarders, shoplifters and the occasional unruly customer while dreaming of the day when he can swap his flashlight for a badge and a gun. Ronnie's delusions of grandeur are put to the test when the mall is struck by a flasher.

Seth Rogen, Anna Faris

Comedy • Rated R

You Changed My Life

Synopsis

It's been six months since Laida won the heart of her prince charming Miggie and it has been nothing but roses—she got promoted, Flippage is now in the same building where Miggie works and best of all, her hair looks better. To Laida, nothing can break her perfect world. Meanwhile, Miggie also feels like he's on top of the world. He is finally okay with his family and for the first time, he's in a relationship that has meaning.

John Lloyd Cruz, Sarah Geronimo

Romance, Comedy • Rated NR

I Love You, Man

Synopsis

Peter Klaven is a successful real estate agent who, upon getting engaged to the woman of his dreams, Zooey, discovers, to his dismay and chagrin, that he has no male friend close enough to serve as his Best Man. Peter immediately sets out to rectify the situation, embarking on a series of bizarre and awkward "man-dates," before meeting Sydney Fife, a charming, opinionated man with whom he instantly bonds.

Paul Rudd, Jason Segel

Comedy • Rated R

Fast & Furious

Monsters vs. Aliens

Friday 4:25 7:20 9:45

Sat and Sun 1:30 4:25 7:20 9:45

Monday 1:30 4:25 7:20

Tues thru Thurs 4:25 7:20

Vin Diesel, Paul Walker

Action, Thriller • Rated PG 13

Friday 4:05 7:00 9:35

Sat and Sun 1:05 4:05 7:00 9:35

Monday 1:05 4:05 7:00

Tues thru Thurs 4:05 7:00

Reese Witherspoon, Hugh Laurie

Action, Comedy, Animated • Rated PG

Friday 4:10 7:10 9:30

Sat and Sun 1:15 4:10 7:10 9:30

Monday 1:15 4:10 7:10

Tues thru Thurs 4:10 7:10

Nicolas Cage, Rose Byrne

Action, Thriller • Rated PG 13

Friday 4:20 7:25 9:45

Sat and Sun 1:20 4:20 7:25 9:45

Monday 1:20 4:20 7:25

Tues thru Thurs 4:20 7:25

Virginia Madsen, Brooklyn Proulx

Thriller, Supernatural • Rated PG 13

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DRAGONBALL EVOLUTION

Messing with the wrong manga

By MICHELLE CASTILLO

(C) 2009, LOS ANGELES TIMES

HOLLYWOOD—Hell hath no fury like an angry fanboy.

“Dragonball Evolution,” set to hit U.S. theaters Friday, is already reaching legendary status as the 2009 film fans love to hate, at least as far as the Internet is concerned.

The makers of the live-action film hoped to tap into a built-in audience by adapting the hugely popular manga epic that had already spawned three anime series, 17 animated feature films and three television specials. Fans all over the world love “Dragon Ball,” but, well, it’s a thin line between love and hate.

Around the Web, fans have been bellowing their anger over the choices made by director James Wong (“The One,” “Final Destination”), who was looking to streamline and mainstream the “Dragon Ball” mythology. It follows Goku, a monkey-tailed Japanese boy, while he trains in martial arts and searches for the seven Dragon Balls that are said to grant the wish of the beholder.

Fans are frothing on YouTube and elsewhere about casting, missing characters, fight scenes and even hairstyles. This is serious stuff to devotees who have followed the manga franchise since it began in 1984 and have shown their allegiance by buying up the tie-in card game, assorted video games, apparel and other merchandise. On IMDb, the movie database Web site, one fan seemed to think a holy crime had been committed: “I could go on for hours about what they did wrong ... may God have mercy on their souls.”

One of the film’s stars, Jamie Chung, who plays Chi Chi, is asking the fans to give it a chance by waiting until the movie reaches the screen before putting it in the same category as “Catwoman” or “Speed Racer,” two other Hollywood movies that took hand-drawn fanboy favorites and turned them into spectacular live-action bombs.

“I feel like all movies that adapt some sort of (material), whether it’s a book or a manga or a cartoon, into a film—you’re going to have to take creative liberty in order to change it so that it works for a motion picture,” she said.

“It’s never going to be the same and you can’t satisfy everyone. What James Wong did was he adapted it in a way where



A promotional poster of Dragonball Evolution.

it still stayed true to the ‘Dragon Ball’ series, with the essence of the characters.”

Chung is best known for being one of the housemates in “The Real World: San Diego.”

At 20th Century Fox, the studio behind the “Dragonball” film, there must be some executives missing the old days when fans waited for a movie to be released before deciding its fate.

This is a new era of relationships between fans and studios. In 2008, Warner Bros. had a Muggle revolt when it abruptly postponed the sixth “Harry Potter” film from a November release to summer 2009 to maximize profit; frustrated fans came after Warner chairman Alan Horn and pledged boycotts when the film reaches theaters.

Fan debate also raged this year with the Warner film “Watchmen,” the Holy Grail of serious comic-book films, but unlike the old days when a controversy might propel a film for weeks at theaters, this time the movie generated more Internet traffic than box-office receipts. Second-week grosses plummeted 67 percent.

Chung, for one, has put full faith in Wong, whom she believes has made some controversial changes to make the film a bit more mainstream to new viewers.

Some of the major “Dragonball” twists include setting the story during Goku’s high school years, as well as casting a white actor in the role. But the biggest: What happened to Goku’s towering spikes?

The hand-drawn Goku is instantly recognizable for his massive black spiked hair, which juts out as if he has an ebony agave plant growing from his head. Wong opted for a somewhat more mundane level of spikes for Justin Chatwin’s natural light-brown hair.

Chung, for one, said change is good sometimes.

“I mean, you can’t make it look ridiculous,” the actress said. “When you’re doing close-up shots, and he’s wearing a 2-foot wig, it just looks ridiculous on film. It’s so different from something that’s from a cartoon to something on film. It’s a completely different world, and it was a huge challenge for James, and I feel like he really overcame.”

Chung also believes the cast was well chosen, even though they might not look like their traditional Japanese characters. The cast includes Emmy Rossum (“The Phantom of the Opera”) and Asian superstar Chow Yun-Fat (“Crouching Tiger, Hidden Dragon”).

Chung said there are plenty of reasons for fans to give Wong’s movie a chance, whether it’s the high-intensity action scenes (shot with a Phantom HD camera for frame rapidity that slows combat for a closer view) or the care given to make sure each character got its own fighting style (Chung’s Chi Chi, for instance, uses taekwondo, allowing her to “look pretty on the outside, but fight like a dude”).

In an unconventional move, “Dragonball” was released first in Asia (as early as March 12, 2008), and the film has done well despite bootleg copies hitting the market. The film passed the \$22-million mark at the end of March, according to Box Office Mojo, and that was without any screenings in South America, North America or most of Europe.

Chung said “Dragonball” is just beginning its fight to win over fans.

“No one wants to make a movie that people will hate,” Chung said. “We really want people to enjoy the movie for what it really is and to come in with an open mind and to understand where James Wong was trying to come from. Regardless of whether or not the fans will agree with it, they will be entertained.”

systems and it’s being fixed,” Amazon’s director of corporate communications, Patty Smith, said in an e-mail Sunday. As of Sunday night, books without rankings included Baldwin’s “Giovanni’s Room,” Vid-

al’s “The City and the Pillar” and Jeanette Winterson’s “Oranges Are Not the Only Fruit.” The removals prompted furious remarks on Facebook, Twitter and elsewhere online.

Craig Seymour, author of the

Amazon ‘glitch’ removes sales rank from gay books

NEW YORK (AP)—A “glitch” on Amazon.com has caused the sales rank to be removed from gay- and/or lesbian-themed books by James Baldwin, Gore Vidal and others.

“There was a glitch in our

Comments about weight hurt young girls more than boys

By ABIGAIL VAN BUREN
FROM UNIVERSAL PRESS SYNDICATE

DEAR ABBY: First of all, thank you so much for your column. My husband and I read it every day and appreciate the advice and support that you give so many people. We, too, have been in the helping profession for almost 30 years.

I am writing about the letter from “Upset Mom in Bellflower” (Feb. 2), about a father who told his daughter’s friend she was getting fat. You rightly pointed out to Upset Mom that the remark made to “Willa” was insensitive and inappropriate, and that it cost her daughter a friend. You also stated that perhaps Dad would be similarly hurt if he were told he was getting a paunch or losing his hair.

Abby, I wish you had added one more comment: Young girls are particularly vulnerable to remarks about their size, and many cases of eating disorders have stemmed from a single, insensitive, ignorant comment from a coach, boyfriend, parent or other adult—whether or not it was the truth.

It’s very important that Willa hear from her friend’s mother or another trusted adult that in fact she is beautiful and can be healthy at any size or shape, so that she will not be tempted to use harmful practices in acting on something that should never have been said in the first place.

LINDSEY COHN, CARLSBAD, CALIF.

DEAR LINDSEY: Thank you for your important addition to the advice I offered Upset Mom. There were plenty of other readers who felt similarly. Read on:

DEAR ABBY: When I was a child, my father made similar comments to me, my mother and most of my girlfriends throughout the time I lived at home. A few years ago, my best friend from grammar school visited me. With tears in her eyes she expressed how hurtful the comments my father had made about her size had been.

Abby, that happened more than 30 years ago, and my friend was still affected. Please remind your readers that it is never appropriate to make disparaging remarks about a person’s weight.

MARY IN ROCHESTER, N.Y.

DEAR ABBY: When I was 15, my father made a crack about my weight. I’m sure he thought he was being “helpful,” because he had seen my mother struggle with her weight. (Mind you, I was 5 feet 9 inches and 120 pounds.) I am now 48 and a successful scientist with a Ph.D. from an Ivy League university, yet I will never forget that remark from my dad. It hurt me to the core.

STILL STINGING IN ARIZONA

DEAR ABBY: The woman’s husband was wrong for saying what he did. You should have told her to insist that he go over to the girl’s house when her mother was present and apologize profusely to both of them for his inconsiderate remark. Maybe then his daughter could get her friend back.

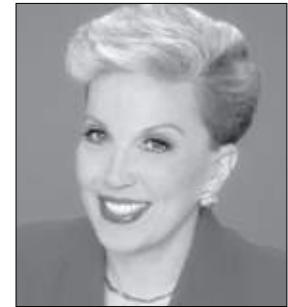
CECILE IN MAINE

DEAR ABBY: I disagreed with the examples you suggested to criticize that man to make him understand the impact it can have. For the most part, men respond differently to criticism than women do. If you tell most men, “You’re getting a paunch” or “Your hair is getting thin,” you won’t get as strong a reaction as when you tell a woman she’s getting fat. Instead try, “You’re not very strong,” “You don’t know much about sports, do you?” or “Your lawn is looking kind of shabby,” depending upon what the man is most vain about. Then you may hit closer to home.

HENRY IN CORONA, CALIF.

Dear Abby is written by Abigail Van Buren, also known as Jeanne Phillips, and was founded by her mother, Pauline Phillips. Write *Dear Abby* at www.DearAbby.com or P.O. Box 69440, Los Angeles, CA 90069.

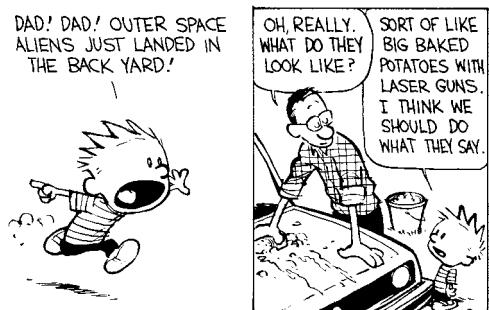
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Dear Abby

Pastimes

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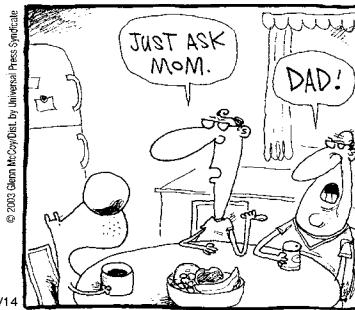
By Bryan Basset



The Duplex



By Glenn McCoy



CROSSWORD

By Eugene Sheffer

ACROSS	35	Small	DOWN	16	Conclude
1 Cry like a banshee	36	Nestling	1 Existed	20	Yale
5 "Say again?"	37	Dashboard	2 Cleopatra's hawk	21	Hairless
9 Crafty	38	features	3 Midafternoon	22	Sheltered
12 Europe's neighbor	39	Folkways	23	It takes thyme	24
13 German car name	40	Painter Mondrian	25	Use a teaspoon	26
14 Tiny veggie	41	Actress Gardner	27	Guitar's spheres	28
15 Peter Parker's alter ego	42	1984	29	Caution	29
17 Cartesian conclusion	43	mockumentary	30	Runs smoothly	31
18 Hostels	44	subject	32	Oklahoma city	33
19 Drove	45	Buddy	34	Small-timer	35
21 Founded (on)	46	Therefore	36	Freshwater	37
24 Unaccompanied	47	51	37	Algae	38
25 Swiss peaks	48	Wapiti	38	Named	39
26 Directly	49	Method (Abbr.)	39	Ellipse	40
30 Floral neckwear	50	10	40	Needles' mates	41
31 Actor Alan	51	Begin	41	41 "Meet Me — Louis"	42
32 NASA deviation	52	53	42	42 Use a crowbar	43
33 Last page?	53	Turned blue?	43	43 Take a shot at	44
			44	44 Time of your life?	45
			45	45 Home for 14-	46
			46	Across	47

Solution time: 21 mins.



Yesterday's answer 4-14

CELEBRITIES BORN ON THIS DAY: Sarah Michelle Gellar, 32; Robert Carlyle, 48; Brad Garrett, 49; Julie Christie, 68

Happy Birthday: You can make big changes in your life if you don't limit yourself to a geographical location. Take on projects that are different from what you would have considered in the past. Sudden changes in personal relationships can be expected. Don't waste too much time analyzing a situation from which it is better to walk away. Your numbers are 9, 16, 21, 25, 33, 41, 48

ARIES (March 21-April 19): If you become overly zealous and talkative, you may give away an idea you have to someone less creative. Secrets and underhandedness on your part or that of someone else will bring you down. Don't get involved. **XXXXX**

TAURUS (April 20-May 20): Take a good look at your investments, bank and credit card balances and any joint ventures you are involved in. Assess your position and your alternatives. This is not the time to lend, borrow or take a chance. **XXX**

GEMINI (May 21-June 20): Don't let life's little problems cause you grief. If you are irritated by someone you thought you could rely on, you could say something that will cost you down the road. Don't change your plans because someone else does. **XXX**

CANCER (June 21-July 22): You have nothing to fear, so jump into a new project or group that offers something a little different from what you are used to. Don't let your feelings confuse you. Don't

let anyone play on your emotions. **XXX**

LEO (July 23-Aug. 22): Your big heart, generosity and outspokenness will tempt others to take advantage of you. Don't promise anyone anything unless you can afford it. Trips and negotiations should be put on hold until you have a better chance of getting your way. **XXXX**

VIRGO (Aug. 23-Sept. 22): You don't have to make a move if you aren't ready. Question anyone who is erratic or using emotional blackmail to coerce you. Now is not the time to spend money on your home or donate or pay for others. **XX**

LIBRA (Sept. 23-Oct. 22): You can add a little extra flavor to your life if you try something new. The friends you make and the inspiration you get along the way will lead to positive changes. Team up with someone who values your skills, technique and your friendship. **XXXX**

SCORPIO (Oct. 23-Nov. 21): You need to be around people who encourage and inspire you. Personal and professional partnerships will grow if you mingle and network. You can develop or take a new approach. **XXXX**

SAGITTARIUS (Nov. 22-Dec. 21): If you haven't built a strong tie to a group you have been dealing with, you may be cut out when you least expect. Honesty and integrity will be a necessity. Underhandedness will catch up with you. **XXX**

CAPRICORN (Dec. 22-Jan. 19): You have plenty of good ideas to put into play

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THE LAST WORD
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and, if you give them a distinctive spin, you will attract interest in what you are doing. Don't give in to anyone looking for a handout or donation or negotiating an unfair deal. **XX**

AQUARIUS (Jan. 20-Feb. 18): You may be in a generous mood but, before you fall for a sob story, consider where your money is best spent. Take into consideration what you can do to make your life, and that of your family, better. Don't be too eager to make changes or decisions. **XXXX**

PISCES (Feb. 19-March 20): Sit tight and watch to see what everyone else does.

If you jump the gun or make a move that isn't well received, you will have trouble reversing your decision. Problems with personal and professional partnerships will develop. **XX**

Birthday Baby: You are sensitive unpredictable, energetic and passionate. You are unique and charismatic—ready for any challenge.

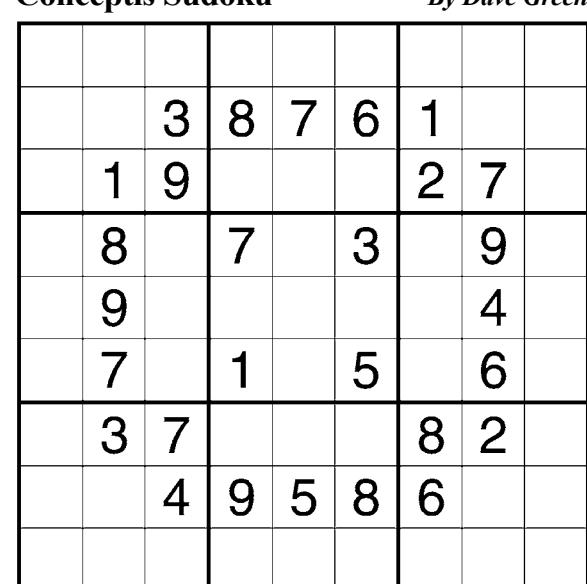
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SUDOKU

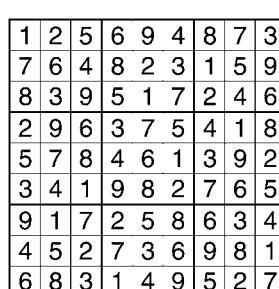
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By Dave Green



Difficulty Level ★★

Yesterday's SUDOKU Answer



4/14

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COACHING RUGBY

By DAVID OUELLET

Solution: 10 letters

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4/14

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Wade's career-high 55 carries Heat past Knicks



MIAMI (AP)—Dwyane Wade had one more argument for MVP voters: the second-best scoring show in Miami Heat history.

Wade scored 55 points, one shy of the franchise record, and the Heat wrapped up the No. 5 spot in the Eastern Conference playoffs by beating the New York Knicks 122-105 on Sunday night.

Miami will play fourth-seeded Atlanta in the first round of the playoffs.

Wade shot 19-for-30 from the field, set a career high with six 3-pointers, and nearly topped Glen Rice's record of 56 points before leaving with 1:06 remaining.

Michael Beasley finished with 28 points and 16 rebounds for the Heat, who also got 15 points from Mario Chalmers.

Al Harrington and Wilson Chandler each scored 21 points for New York. Quentin Richardson finished with 14 and David Lee had an 11-point, 11-rebound night for the Knicks.

Wade scored for the final time with 5:31 remaining. Only then did the Knicks figure out how to stop him, well after it was too late.

Wade's MVP candidacy is so important to the Heat that the franchise took the step—rare for them—of campaigning for the award. Last week, the team sent out a promotional DVD to post-season award voters.

Now, it's already outdated. This might have been the best show of the season.

He was diving on the floor for loose balls, finished with nine rebounds, and dominated the Knicks in Miami for the second time this season.

It was the 11th 50-point game in the NBA this season, the third by Wade—matching Cleveland's LeBron James for the league's high—and the third against the Knicks. Kobe Bryant got the NBA season-best point total with 61 in Madison Square Garden on Feb. 2, and James scored 52 at New York's famed arena two nights later.

Wade now has six of the eight highest-scoring games in Heat history, four of them this season.

Consecutive 3-pointers by Wade late in the third quarter put Miami up 95-87. He reached 50 points on an 8-footer with 26.4 seconds left in the third quarter, meaning the Heat entered the final period leading by six, and with the rest of Wade's teammates trailing him by three.

Yes, through three quarters, it was Wade 50, Rest of Heat 47.

He became the first player since Bryant to score 50 before the fourth quarter began. Bryant did it Nov. 30, 2006 against Utah, getting 52 through three periods and not playing in the fourth, according to the Elias Sports Bureau.

The Knicks' season ends Wednesday, and accordingly, they played a loose style.

Larry Hughes intercepted a pass at one end, dribbled the other way and spun a behind-the-back flip to Chris Wilcox—who ran over Heat forward James Jones on his way to a three-point play that drew New York within 37-32 with 11:08 left in the half.

That was part of a big second quarter by the high-octane Knicks, who trailed by as many as 14 points in the first half before getting going.

New York managed only 17 points in

the game's first 9 1/2 minutes, then put up a staggering 48 points in the next 14 1/2, taking a 65-63 lead into intermission. The Knicks shot 68 percent in the second quarter alone, with Harrington getting 15 points in one seven-minute stretch of the period.

And yet, they couldn't pull away, simply because they couldn't stop Wade.

Miami's MVP hopeful—"MV3"—they're now calling him, a nod to his jersey number—had 27 points by halftime on 10-for-14 shooting, even though he spent the first 5 1/2 minutes of the second quarter on the bench.

Everything Wade shot seemed like it went in, even a behind-the-backboard attempt midway through the third quarter during a stoppage after a foul. It swished, didn't count, and the crowd cheered anyway.

Hornets 102, Mavericks 92

At New Orleans, Chris Paul narrowly missed his seventh triple-double with 31 points, 17 assists and nine rebounds. David West scored 31 points to help New Orleans (49-31) move a game ahead of Dallas for the sixth playoff seed in the Western Conference. Each team has two games left in the regular season.

Dirk Nowitzki had 29 points and 14 rebounds for the Mavericks, who had

Miami Heat guard Dwyane Wade (3) goes up for a shot against New York Knicks guard Nate Robinson, left, and forward Wilson Chandler during the fourth quarter of an NBA basketball game Sunday, April 12, 2009 in Miami.

AP



Pacers' Dunleavy says knee surgery was career-threatening

INDIANAPOLIS (AP)—About five weeks ago, Mike Dunleavy thought his basketball career might be over.

The pain in his right knee was severe enough to cut his comeback short, and the high-scoring Indiana Pacers guard agreed to a risky surgery to remove a bone spur. He was told he might not regain the strength to play again after the procedure.

"Beforehand, they were probably saying 50-50," Dunleavy told the Associated Press. "Now, the way I'm progressing and the way I'm moving forward, we feel very confident that I'll be able to get back, and probably better than I was."

Dunleavy finished sixth in the most improved player award voting last season after averaging 19.1 points, 5.2 rebounds and 3.5 assists per game. The wing combination of Dunleavy and Danny Granger was expected to carry the Pacers this season.

Instead, while Granger emerged as an All-Star, Dunleavy missed the first 34 games with lingering pain in the knee. He eventually returned and averaged 15.1 points in 18 games before shutting down because the pain continued to increase. It was discovered that the bone spur had done significant damage to his patella tendon.

The Pacers announced on March 6 that Dunleavy had successful surgery at the Steadman-Hawkins Clinic in Vail, Colo.

"I was forced to get the surgery to remove it (the bone spur), which I guess you would call a last resort,"

Dunleavy said. "They removed the spur and without doing any major damage to the tendon. They were able to sew the tendon back up. Now, it's a matter of waiting to let that tendon heal, getting it strong again, and that process is going to take some time."

Pacers coach Jim O'Brien doesn't expect Dunleavy back until at least 2010.

"Nothing that I have heard has Mike coming back anytime before January," O'Brien said. "It's not even on my radar. I have to approach next year as if he's not coming back."

Dunleavy is still in the resting phase of his rehabilitation.

"The main thing the first six weeks is letting the knee heal," he said. "To have any hopes of getting in the pool or riding a bike or cardio work—you don't worry about that right now. You can make up for all that later."

The waiting around isn't something Dunleavy is used to. He missed a total of 11 games his first six NBA seasons. It has been especially difficult for him because he was coming off a career-best performance.

"There's been a lot of sitting around and a lot of boring afternoons, but that's part of the process," he said. "You've got to get through that."

If Dunleavy isn't careful, his starting job will be long gone before he returns. Rookie Brandon Rush has been exceptional as Dunleavy's replacement. He scored 29 points in back-to-back games in late March against Washington and Chicago.

"Over the last month, he's playing with a great deal of confidence," O'Brien said. "I think confidence breeds good play. He's not only playing good basketball, he's defending at a high level. As a result, he's on the court extended minutes."

"Brandon will be hard to beat out in the position opposite of Danny next year," Rush started off slowly this season, but has taken advantage of the minutes that have become available with the injuries to Dunleavy and Marquis Daniels.

"He's proving that he deserves the minutes that he's getting," O'Brien said. "He's using his dribble to attack well, and he's defending and getting more comfortable in every phase of the game."

Dunleavy said the injuries could benefit the Pacers in the long run, as long as they don't continue to be a recurring theme.

"It's given a lot of different guys a chance to play and produce," he said. "I think it's been good. Our future looks bright. We've certainly increased our depth. If we can look forward into next season with a healthy team, I think we've got a good chance to not only make the playoffs, but win in the playoffs."

How much Dunleavy will have to do with that is unclear.

"In terms of how far I have to go or when I'm going to be back, we don't know right now. Just continue to work and improve, and whenever I'll be back, I'll be back," he said.

pulled even with New Orleans on Friday by beating the Hornets in Dallas. Josh Howard added 15 points for the Mavericks.

Cavaliers 107, Celtics 76

At Cleveland, LeBron James made five 3-pointers and scored 29 points before dancing in his seat, and the Cavaliers throttled the NBA champions to move within one win of matching the 1985-86 Celtics for the best home record in league history.

At 39-1, the Cavs can tie Boston's mark against Philadelphia on Wednesday night.

Equaling those Celtics of Bird, McHale and Parish, though, won't mean anything if the Cavs can't dethrone the current guys in green sometime this spring. The Cavs led 31-9 after the first quarter, opened a 30-point lead in the second and turned a possible playoff preview into a rout.

It was Cleveland's most lopsided win ever in 173 games against the Celtics.

Raptors 111, 76ers 104

At Toronto, Chris Bosh scored 22 points, Jose Calderon had 11 points and 11 assists, and the Raptors handed the 76ers their season-high fifth straight loss.

Anthony Parker scored 18 points, Andrea Bargnani had 17 and Shawn Marion had 14 for the Raptors, who won for the first time in five games.

Louis Williams had 23 points and Andre Iguodala had 21 for the 76ers, with Samuel Dalembert adding 18 points and 12 rebounds.

Andre Miller and Marreese Speights each had 10 points for the 76ers, who have their first five-game losing streak since dropping seven in a row between Jan. 2-14, 2008.

Spurs 95, Kings 92

At Sacramento, Calif., Michael Finley's 3-pointer with 1.3 seconds left counted despite his apparent shot-clock violation and won the game.

Tony Parker had 25 points and nine assists for the Spurs, who moved into a tie with Houston atop the Southwest Division with two games left.

San Antonio kept Tim Duncan out of uniform to rest his sore knees, and the NBA-worst Kings led for most of the night before Finley's winner—even if television replays appeared to show the ball still in Finley's hands with the shot clock at 00.

Referee Dan Crawford's crew explained that shot-clock violations are unreviewable to irate Sacramento coach Kenny Natt, whose Kings lost their eighth straight.

Lakers 92, Grizzlies 75

At Los Angeles, Andrew Bynum scored 18 points in his third game back from a knee injury and the Lakers rolled.

Kobe Bryant took just nine shots, made seven, and finished with 16 points, seven rebounds and four assists. Pau Gasol, often matched against his brother Marc in the middle, scored 12 points and had 13 rebounds.

The 7-foot Bynum, who missed 32 games after tearing the medial collateral ligament in his right knee Jan. 31, played 25:03 against the Grizzlies. He went 6-of-10 from the floor and had five rebounds.

O.J. Mayo led the Grizzlies with 20 points, and Marc Gasol had 14 points, eight rebounds and four assists.

Abreu's 2 RBIs help Angels beat Bosox



ANAHEIM, Calif. (AP)—Bobby Abreu hit a go-ahead two-run single and Vladimir Guerrero hit his first home run of the season, leading the Los Angeles Angels to a testy 5-4 victory over the Boston Red Sox on Sunday.

Dustin Moseley (1-0) was charged with three runs and six hits in 5 2-3 innings, striking out three in the finale of a tragic and somber season-opening homestand for the two-time defending AL West champions. Brian Fuentes got three outs for his second save.

The Angels won the series opener on Friday night following an emotional tribute to teammate Nick Adenhart, the 22-year-old rookie pitcher who was killed early Thursday along with two friends when the car they were in was broadsided by a van driven by a suspected drunken driver.

Josh Beckett (1-1) allowed four runs and eight hits in six innings for Boston.

There was tension from the start between the two American League heavyweights.

The benches cleared in the first inning after the Angels took exception when Beckett threw a pitch over Abreu's head just as time was being called by plate umpire Paul Schreiber.

White Sox 6, Twins 1

At Chicago, Jim Thome hit a two-run homer to break open a pitcher's duel and Mark Buehrle was dominant into the seventh inning, leading the White Sox to the victory.

Carlos Quentin singled off Nick Blackburn in the sixth before Thome hit his second homer of the season, snapping a 1-1 tie.

Jermaine Dye added a homer in the eighth for the White Sox, who scored in each of the last four innings to split a season-opening six-game homestand. Chicago, which outscored the Twins 14-1 the last two games, now heads on a 10-game road trip.

Buehrle (1-0) gave up Delmon Young's homer in the second and then retired 15 straight batters before being pulled with one out in the seventh.

Blackburn (0-1) allowed four runs—three earned—and six hits in six-plus innings.

Indians 8, Blue Jays 4

At Cleveland, Anthony Reyes pitched six innings and the Indians earned their first victory of the season.

Travis Hafner and Mark DeRosa each hit a two-run homer for the Indians, who avoided their worst start in 95 years. Cleveland lost its first six games in 1914.

The Washington Nationals are the majors' only remaining winless team at 0-6.

Blue Jays starter David Purcey struck out 10 over 4 2-3 innings. The left-hander also walked six and allowed five runs and four hits.

Vernon Wells hit a two-run homer for Toronto.

Reyes became the first Indians starter to pitch six innings. The Blue Jays had scored a major league-high 42 runs in winning five of their first six games, but managed only four runs and three hits against the right-hander.

Rays 11, Orioles 3

At Baltimore, James Shields pitched

seven innings of three-hit ball, Evan Longoria hit his major league-leading fifth home run and Tampa Bay averted a three-game sweep.

Longoria went 3-for-5 to up his batting average to .481. He has five straight multihit games and at least one RBI in five of his six starts.

Ben Zobrist, Jason Bartlett and Carlos Pena also homered for the Rays, who got 17 hits. All four home runs came off Brian Bass, who allowed seven runs in 3 1-3 innings of relief.

Shields (1-1) struck out three and walked one. Dan Wheeler allowed one hit in the eighth before Grant Balfour was tagged for three runs in the ninth.

Adam Eaton (0-1) allowed four runs and eight hits over four innings in his debut with Baltimore.

Mariners 1, Athletics 0

At Oakland, Calif., Erik Bedard allowed three hits pitching into the ninth inning and Mike Sweeney doubled in a

Chamberlain held the Royals to three runs—one earned—and four hits in six innings. He struck out five, walked one and hit two batters with pitches.

Gil Meche went seven innings for the Royals, allowing four runs and six hits.

Tigers 6, Rangers 4

At Detroit, Brandon Inge homered and hit a two-run single in a six-run eighth inning as the Tigers rallied to complete a three-game sweep.

Carlos Guillen also had a two-run double for Detroit, which trailed 4-0 after seven innings. Placido Polanco went 3-for-4 with an RBI and Miguel Cabrera had two hits.

Brandon Lyon (1-1) threw two perfect innings and Fernando Rodney got three outs for his second save in as many days. Detroit relievers have pitched seven innings in the last two games without allowing a baserunner.

Josh Hamilton and Ian Kinsler hit

two-run homer and Cincinnati overcame a triple play by Pittsburgh to get the victory.

Harang (1-1) faced just three batters over the minimum while pitching his sixth shutout and 12th complete game. The right-hander threw 108 pitches, 80 for strikes. It was the first complete-game shutout of the year in the majors.

Pittsburgh's Ian Snell (0-2) gave up two runs and five hits over six innings.

Cincinnati had a chance to add to its lead in the eighth inning with Jay Bruce on first and Brandon Phillips on second. Edwin Encarnacion hit a blooper into short left that was easily caught by Jack Wilson, who threw to Freddy Sanchez at second base to double up Phillips. By then, Bruce was already at second, and Sanchez threw to first baseman Adam LaRoche to complete the triple play.

Cardinals 3, Astros 0

At St. Louis, Kyle Lohse threw a ca-

5 1-3 innings.

San Diego has won four straight to raise its record to 5-2, the first time the Padres have been three games over .500 since the end of the 2007 season.

Dodgers 3, Diamondbacks 1

At Phoenix, Randy Wolf tossed two-hit ball into the eighth inning, out-pitching Dan Haren to lead the Dodgers to the victory.

Wolf (1-1) helped Los Angeles take two of three in an early season series between teams expected to contend in the NL West. The left-hander allowed one run, struck out five and walked two in seven-plus innings.

Jonathan Broxton pitched a perfect ninth for his third save.

Braves 8, Nationals 5

At Atlanta, Chipper Jones drove in two runs, including a tiebreaking single, and Atlanta handed Washington its sixth straight loss to start the season.

Jair Jurrjens (2-0) gave up five hits and walked five in 5 1-3 innings but allowed only four runs, three earned, to help the Braves sweep the three-game series and improve to 5-1.

Washington is the only winless team in the majors.

The Braves scored their first five runs on two-out rallies in the fourth and fifth to beat Scott Olsen (0-2), who gave up six hits and five runs in five innings.

Phillies 7, Rockies 5

At Denver, pinch-hitter Matt Stairs connected for a tiebreaking two-run homer in the ninth inning to lead Philadelphia to the win.

Chase Utley tied it at 5 with a two-run homer in the eighth and Ryan Howard had three hits for the Phillies, who won the last two of the three-game series. Utley went 2-for-3 and scored three times.

Ryan Madson (1-0) worked a scoreless eighth and Brad Lidge, the last of six Philadelphia pitchers, finished for his second save.

Pedro Feliz hit a leadoff double in the ninth against Huston Street (0-1). Feliz was sacrificed to third before Stairs, batting for Madson, went deep for his first of the season and 15th career pinch-hit drive.

Colorado put two men on in the ninth, but Lidge got Troy Tulowitzki to

Cubs 8, Brewers 5

At Milwaukee, Alfonso Soriano smacked the first pitch of the game off the facade in center field for a leadoff home run, and things just got worse from there for Milwaukee Brewers starter Jeff Suppan in Chicago's victory.

The Cubs took two of three games from their NL Central rivals—and didn't even break a sweat as they re-took the lead Sunday, as Milwaukee pitchers walked home four runs in a miserable fourth inning.

Cubs closer Kevin Gregg—who watched Carlos Marmol close out Saturday's game after blowing a save Friday night—pitched the ninth in a non-save situation but struggled again. After getting two quick outs, Gregg gave up a homer to Rickie Weeks, a double to Craig Counsell and a walk to Ryan Braun before striking out Prince Fielder to end the game.



Los Angeles Angels' Bobby Abreu is held back by the umpire and Angels manager Mike Scioscia as the benches clear after Boston Red Sox's Josh Beckett threw a high pitch that hit the backstop during the first inning of a baseball game Sunday, April 12, 2009, in Anaheim, Calif.

run in the seventh for Seattle.

Bedard (1-0) was within two outs of his second career shutout when he was lifted for David Aardsma, who struck out Jason Giambi and got Jack Cust to line out with a pair of runners aboard for his second save.

Trevor Cahill (0-1) retired 11 consecutive batters before Adrian Beltre singled up the middle with one out in the seventh, breaking up the rookie's bid for a no-hitter. After Russell Branyan flew out, Sweeney drove in the game's only run with a double to center.

Royals 6, Yankees 4

At Kansas City, Mo., John Buck homered and drove in three runs, helping Kansas City rally to avoid a three-game sweep.

The Royals scored three runs with two outs in the eighth inning off Jose Veras and Phil Coke (0-1), spoiling a solid start by Joba Chamberlain in his season debut.

Joakim Soria earned his third save by striking out the side in the ninth. Juan Cruz (1-0) worked a perfect eighth for the win, helped by a diving catch in right field from Willie Bloomquist.

two-run homers for Texas, which wasted a terrific start by Kevin Millwood. The right-hander threw seven shutout innings, allowing just four hits and striking out six. C.J. Wilson (0-1) got the loss.

Marlins 2, Mets 1

At Miami, Josh Johnson's dominant outing was just enough to beat Johan Santana.

Johnson pitched a five-hitter for his second complete game in 45 career starts and the Florida Marlins scored two unearned runs to edge Santana and the Mets, handing the New York ace his first loss since June 28.

While Johnson retired 15 batters in a row, Santana was just as good. The left-hander struck out 13 in seven innings, allowing only three hits. But left fielder Daniel Murphy dropped a two-out flyball in the second for an error that led to both Florida runs.

Santana (1-1) had made 18 starts in a row without a loss, winning 10 consecutive decisions.

Reds 2, Pirates 0

At Cincinnati, Aaron Harang threw a three-hitter, Brandon Phillips hit a

reer-best three-hitter, retiring 24 in a row after giving up a single on his first pitch, and St. Louis completed a three-game sweep.

Khalil Greene had three hits and an RBI, and Ryan Ludwick extended his hitting streak to 16 games with an RBI single for the Cardinals, who went 5-2 on their opening homestand and limited the opposition to two or fewer runs in three of the last four.

Houston has lost four in a row and has scuffled to a 1-5 start while totaling 16 runs.

Padres 6, Giants 1

At San Diego, Chris Young pitched seven strong innings to beat Tim Lincecum, and Nick Hundley had a career-high four hits for the Padres.

Young (2-0) allowed an unearned run and four hits. The right-hander, who retired the first 12 batters, struck out seven and did not walk a batter.

Linecum (0-2) had another rough outing after he tied his career low by lasting just three innings in Monday's season-opening 10-6 win over Milwaukee. The reigning NL Cy Young Award winner gave up four runs and a career-high 10 hits over

CABRERA

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Perry bladed a chip across the 17th green for one bogey, then hit into a bunker on the 18th hole and narrowly missed a 15-foot par putt that would have brought him the major championship he covets.

But he was gracious as ever, clapping for Cabrera when he holed an 8-foot putt for his unlikely par to stay in the playoff. And even in defeat, it was hard not to appreciate the give-and-take nature that was restored at the Masters.

"I may never get this opportunity ever again, but I had a lot of fun being in there," Perry said. "I had the tournament to win. I lost the tournament. But Angel hung in there. I was proud of him."

Two years after winning the U.S. Open at Oakmont, Cabrera became the sixth player this decade to win multiple majors.

And he finally gave Argentines some happy memories of the Masters.

It was 41 years ago when Roberto de Vicenzo made one of golf's most famous gaffes, signing for the wrong score that denied him a spot in a Masters playoff.

When Cabrera returned home as the U.S. Open champion two years ago, de Vicenzo gave him a special gift.

"He gave me a frame where he has in his hand a green jacket, and he says, 'I hope this gives you luck, so someday you can bring back a green jacket for yourself,'" Cabrera said.

BUCHER

From Page 28

she said.

During a meeting with Taga Inc. president Wolf Mojica at the DFS conference Room last Saturday afternoon, Bucher and three other pro triathletes talked not only about their chances for the race and the tough course but also how they feel about the people on Saipan.

They said that it's here where they experienced a different kind of hospitality unlike in other Xterra venues where they just go there for the sake of competition.

Bucher and fellow Swiss Jim McConnel and Julie Dibens and Sam Gardner of Great Britain are staying with their sponsors' homes during the course of the

Campbell finished with a 69 to join the playoff at 12-under 276, but he was eliminated on the first extra hole when he found a bunker from the middle of the 18th fairway, then watched his 6-foot par putt lip out of the hole.

It was his second close call in a major. Six years ago at the PGA Championship, Campbell was one shot behind on the 18th hole at Oak Hill when Shaun Micheel hit a 7-iron to 2 inches. "I just got beat by a better shot," Campbell said. "And today, I kind of blew it myself. I hit bad shots."

The final hour was almost enough to make a dizzy gallery forget about the Woods-Mickelson fireworks hours earlier.

For those who feared Augusta National had become too tough, too dull and far too quiet, the roars returned in a big way.

Mickelson and Woods played together in a final round of a major for the first time in eight years, and they proved to be the best undercard in golf.

Mickelson tied a Masters record with a 30 on the front nine to get into contention. Woods chased him around Amen Corner, then caught him with three birdies in a four-hole stretch that captured the imagination of thousands of fans who stood a dozen deep in spots for a view.

But it ended with a thud. Mickelson lost his momentum with a 9-iron into Rae's Creek on the par-3 12th, and when he missed a 4-foot eagle putt and a 5-foot birdie putt down the stretch. He had to settle for a 67 that left him three shots behind.

But it ended with a thud.

Mickelson lost his momentum with a 9-iron into Rae's Creek on the par-3 12th, and when he missed a 4-foot eagle putt and a 5-foot birdie putt down the stretch. He had to settle for a 67 that left him three shots behind.

His charge came on the front

Woods bogeyed the last two holes for a 68 to finish another shot back.

Then came the Main Event.

Perry did not make a birdie until his 20-foot putt on the 12th curled into the side of the cup. Campbell, playing in the group ahead, narrowly missed two eagle putts on the back nine to forge a brief share of the lead.

It looked like Perry had the green jacket buttoned up when he hit his tee shot to within a foot of the cup on the par-3 16th hole for a two-shot lead over Campbell and Cabrera, who made an 18-foot birdie putt on the 16th just to stay in the game.

Then came his stunning collapse, the second time he has lost a major in a playoff. The other time was 13 years ago at Valhalla, which has haunted Perry the rest of his career.

"I'm not going to feel sorry," Perry said. "If this is the worst thing that happens to me, I can live with it. I really can. Great players get it done, and Angel got it done. This is his second major he won. I've blown two. But that's the only two I've had chances of winning."

Despite all the cheers and excitement that returned to the Masters, no one really lit up the back nine the way Jack Nicklaus did when he won in 1986, or Mickelson and Ernie Els did in 2004.

But the possibility was there, and that's all that mattered. All afternoon, there was endless chatter about who would make the big charge on the back nine.

Mickelson didn't bother waiting that long.

His charge came on the front

nine, a record-tying 30 as he raced up the leaderboard and delighted a massive gallery with four consecutive birdies. The most significant came at No. 7, when he powered a shot around the trees to inside a foot.

Fans who stood a dozen-deep behind the green were jumping and waving their arms, a scene that looked more like a Duke-North Carolina basketball game than staid, proper Augusta National.

It was perfect timing—and perfect location.

About 40 yards down the hill, Cabrera played his pitch to the par-5 second just as the loudest cheer of early afternoon shook the pines.

For the final pairing at the Masters, Cabrera and Perry didn't get much attention. Their gallery was thin, about one-fifth the size of the mass following Woods and Mickelson. There was no energy. No birdies, either.

"I felt that when Tiger and Phil were making birdies and were making a move, I had to make a move myself in order to be the winner," Cabrera said.

Padraig Harrington, whose bid for a third straight major officially ended with a 73 to finish even par for the week, looked over to see Perry and Cabrera make the turn.

"There's hardly anybody watching the leaders," he said.

But they got plenty of attention later, after the Woods-Mickelson circus left town.

"It's sure nice to hear the roars coming back out here," Larry Mize said. "That's what you love about this place."

their training until the end of the competition.

Xterra Saipan is scheduled on April 18 and the Tagaman is on April 25.

"The people are super friendly. Unlike in other places where you focus on the race, there are so many things to do here. You get a lot of greetings from the people along the road even you are on the bike," Bucher said.

Gardner, for his part, said he enjoys eating with the people and always looks forward to socializing with them.

"Every single person you meet, it seems they know me. I'm very relaxed because everyone is happy. Everyone is waving at you," Gardner observes.

They rode to their bikes Friday morning as they joined people going up and down Mount Tapochau in observance of Lent.

Dibens begged off from competing this time in the Tagaman because of an earlier commit-

Gardner and McConnel said that aside from the positive atmosphere, they also enjoy the fantastic weather.

"There's no better place in the world like the beautiful beaches here," he said.

Asked about her chances against Dibens, Bucher says she always has a great chance of course "but it's not between the two of us."

"I just don't race against Julie. Besides there are other competitors. I just love to race on Saipan," she said.

Bucher won Xterra Saipan from 2005 to 2008.

Dibens, who placed second in 2007, won the Tagaman as well as the PIC Double during the year. She did not compete last year.

Dibens begged off from competing this time in the Tagaman because of an earlier commit-

ment in another event in Florida. She has won the Xterra World Championship in Maui the past two years.

Before arriving on Saipan, Dibens extended her mastery of Bucher by winning in the Guam Xterra earlier this month.

Gardner won the men's division in Guam, while McConnel was second.

"I was second due to the smaller number of competitors," he said.

On Saipan, they will be tackling the likes of Mike Vine from Canada and defending champion Andrew Noble of Australia.

Vine won the inaugural event in 2002 and is coming back for the first time since his victory. He just came off from winning the 2008 U.S. Xterra.

Noble is the winner of the last two Tagaman races as well as the PIC Double.

Ion Swim Meet in February.

Braig timed in at 37.84 seconds in the 50m butterfly swim, eclipsing Jonathan Sakovich's time of 38.45 seconds, which was recorded on Jan. 13, 1980.

The SSC swimmer crushed the second oldest record in CNMI swimming history. The oldest were Sakovich's 50m, 100m, and 200m freestyle marks in the 8-and-under division. The records (April 5, 1979) stood for 30 years before Tsunami Saipan's Ryosei Toda and Hiroto Yanai broke them during the same dual meet, two weeks ago.

Braig's first record of the year broke the oldest mark in his age group. Two more age group records were set in 1980 with

Keith Ludwick clocking in at 39.50 seconds in the 50m backstroke (March 28, 1980) and 1:26.08 in the 100m backstroke (October 5, 1980).

Meanwhile, more than 20 SSC swimmers participated in the dual meet, which was held on April 4 and 5. The list included Sarah, Andrew, and Matthew Klassen, Grace and Andrew Kimball, Emma and Abigail Martinsen, Bryce Daly, Lennosuke Suzuki, Taiga Sato, Emily and Steven An, Lindsay Esplin, Junior Pamaran, Lester Lapuz, Kento Akimaru, Luther Lizama, Michael and Keanna Villagomez, Ryu Tanizawa, Tatiana Calvo, Michael Moran, Victoria Chentsova, and Akira Kadokura.

In preparation for Saturday's races, local and off-island participants are invited to join a 6am ride to a few portion of Xterra course at Capital Hill today.

Tomorrow at 12pm, a Tank 2 Tank swim will be held at the

TIBUNE SPORTS SCORES**NBA STANDINGS**

	W	L	Pct	GB
Philadelphia	3	3	.500	2
Washington	0	6	.000	5
Central Division				
St. Louis	5	2	.714	-
Chicago	4	2	.667	1/2
Pittsburgh	3	3	.500	1 1/2
Cincinnati	2	3	.400	2
Milwaukee	2	4	.333	2 1/2
Houston	1	5	.167	3 1/2
Southeast Division				
y-Orlando	58	22	.725	-
x-Atlanta	46	34	.575	12
x-Miami	42	38	.525	16
Charlotte	35	45	.438	23
Washington	19	61	.238	39
West Division				
San Diego	5	2	.714	-
Los Angeles	4	3	.571	1
Colorado	3	3	.500	1 1/2
Arizona	2	4	.333	2 1/2
San Francisco	2	4	.333	2 1/2
Yesterday's Games				
Detroit 6, Texas 4				
Cleveland 8, Toronto 4				
Tampa Bay 11, Baltimore 3				
Chicago White Sox 6, Minnesota 1				
Kansas City 6, N.Y. Yankees 4				
L.A. Angels 5, Boston 4				
Seattle 1, Oakland 0				
Florida 2, N.Y. Mets 1				
Cincinnati 2, Pittsburgh 0				
Atlanta 8, Washington 5				
St. Louis 3, Houston 0				
Philadelphia 7, Colorado 5				
San Diego 6, San Francisco 1				
L.A. Dodgers 3, Arizona 1				
Chicago Cubs 8, Milwaukee 5				

WESTERN CONFERENCE

	W	L	Pct	GB
x-Houston	52	28	.650	-
x-San Antonio	52	28	.650	-
x-New Orleans	49	31	.613	3
x-Dallas	48	32	.600	4
Memphis	23	57	.288	29

NORTHWEST DIVISION

	W	L	Pct	GB
x-Denver	53	27	.663	-
x-Portland	52	28	.650	1
x-Utah	47	33	.588	6
Minnesota	24	56	.300	29
Oklahoma City	22	58	.275	31

PACIFIC DIVISION

Powerpuffs complete back-to-back title

By NAZARIO RODRIGUEZ JR.
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REPORTER

 After a mediocre performance in the preliminary rounds, Powerpuffs easily defeated Alatal Juicy in the championship game, 25-10, 25-18, to complete its back-to-back title quest in the 18-and-under girls division of the 2nd Annual Spring Break Youth Volleyball Festival last Saturday at the Gilbert C. Ada Gymnasium.

Powerpuffs avoided early elimination as it barely made it to the playoffs after finishing fourth with a 6-4 record behind Starz (8-2), Alatal Juicy (8-2), and Lady Ayuyus (6-4).

Two other teams joined the tournament—Magas and DARE.

It was a completely different campaign from a year ago for Powerpuffs when the team topped the elimination round with eight wins and a lone loss en route to winning their first championship.

Making up the repeat champions are Nicole Lebria, Yvette Bennett, Yvonne

Bennett, Dion diaz, Reylynn Sapong, Nikita Hofschneider, Lia Rangamar, and Jacque Wonenberg.

This year's runner-up team was anchored by Lily Williams, Lena Guzman, Lalaine Pagarao, Marbelyn Asito, Kaylani Lebria, and Rachel Rangamar.

In the battle for third place, the Starz needed three sets to prevail over the Lady Ayuyus, 21-14, 18-16, 15-9.

The Starz said they could have advanced to the finals if not for a snafu in the scheduling that caused them a forfeiture against Powerpuffs in the eliminations.

In the 14-and-under girls, Whispering Palms School made it a double victory for the Navy Hill institution following its win in the boys division.

The WPS girls won over Hopwood in the finals. The champion team was bannered by Illia Corella, Kristina Folta, Raina Klaver, Amy Arenovski, Phalai Frink, Victoria Chentsova, Marin Nakamura, and Minori Yoshida.

Tottot, meanwhile, defeated Kagman in the finals of the 12-and-under division.



NAZARIO RODRIGUEZ JR.

Powerpuffs receive their champion and perpetual trophies for the 18-and-under girls division during the awards ceremony for the 2nd Annual Spring Break Youth Volleyball Festival at the Gilbert C. Ada Gymnasium last Saturday.

Bike fitting techniques for Tagaman participants

By NAZARIO RODRIGUEZ JR.
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REPORTER

A company from Japan will be setting up a temporary mini shop during the Tagaman Triathlon to teach new bike fitting techniques to participants of the longest running multi-sport event in the region.

Ben Distel of T1bicycles recently announced that his company will be at the Tagaman Triathlon Expo to offer F.I.S.T. (Fit Institute Slowswitch) certified bike fitting services for the participants.

The company is based in the Roppongi District of Tokyo.

Distel has extensive experience as a bike fitter and is proud to be the original fitter of Kona champ Chris Wellington and many top age group athletes in Southeast Asia, Hong Kong, and Japan.

"A professional bike fit configures the bike to you for optimal balance in

comfort, power, aerodynamics, sustainability, and efficiency," said Distel in a message sent to the Northern Mariana Islands Triathlon Federation and the participants of the Tagaman race scheduled on April 25.

Distel said the process would take approximately 90 minutes.

He said several adjustments would be made to the bike to achieve the efficiency.

He said they would be giving special price of \$150 for Tagaman participants.

The normal price is \$250.

Time slots are available on April 22 at 11am, 2pm, and 4pm; April 23 at 9am, 11am, and 2pm; and April 24 at 9am and 11am.

To book your appointments, you may contact Distel at bendistel@mac.com or info@T1bicycles.com or www.T1bicycles.com or call him at +81 (0)90 6562 4430 and for more information on the company, the

website is www.t1bicycles.com.

He said appointments on April 25-27 are negotiable.

Stephen Vance said he had done professional fittings before and found them beneficial.

"They may recommend some changes in adjustments or even components. Availability of components on island could limit your ability to act on the advice," Vance noted.

He said that "if you're really comfortable in your current bike, changes to the position to make it more ideal could make it feel awkward in the short-term, although possibly with long-term benefits."

Several professional triathletes from the United Kingdom, Switzerland, Canada, United States, Japan, and Australia started arriving as early as April 5 in time for the XTERRA Saipan Championship.

Spearfishing tourney returns on May 16

By NAZARIO RODRIGUEZ JR.
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REPORTER

The Marianas Apnea Spearfishing Club announced that it is now getting ready for the 3rd Annual Spearfishing Tournament slated May 16 at the Smiling Cove Marina.

MASC president Morito Asai said the tournament would start at 6am and last until 4pm with no limitation on the area coverage.

He said the spearfishing area includes Tinian or Goat Island, except sanctuary and dive spots.

Asai also said participants may go to Banzai Cliff area.

Categories to be contested are biggest fish (first prize only) and total weight, which includes individual (first to third) and team (first to 10th places).

To qualify for submission, the catch must be at least 11 lbs.

The MASC president said there would be no fish category this year to



SAIPAN TRIBUNE
The 3rd Annual Spearfishing Tournament will be held May 16 at the Smiling Cove Marina.

minimize the time for weigh-ins.

The entry fee per person is \$50.

Interested participants may start registering now and the deadline for submission of entries is on May 9.

Asai said that participants from Tinian, Rota, Guam, or other island residents are required to send through e-mail their registration forms before May 9.

Payments can be made a day before the tournament.

On the other, Saipan residents are required to submit or e-mail the form and make payment before the May 9.

Asai said registration forms would be sent via email in next few days.

For more details, contact Asai at dive@aquasmith.com.

Guam's Mike Genereaux won last year's tournament by topping the individual total weight category, while Scott Moen of Rota won the biggest fish category.

About 40 divers joined the tournament submitting a variety of fish including parrot, trivally, rudder, black snapper, sweetlips, unicorn or tataga, grouper, emperor, and goat fish in different sizes.



NAZARIO RODRIGUEZ JR.

A San Vicente player dribbles past a defender from Oleai in this bit of action in the Inaugural Interscholastic Elementary Basketball Tournament girls division held two weeks ago at the Marianas High School Gymnasium.

North vs. South in Interscholastic All-Star Game

By NAZARIO RODRIGUEZ JR.
n_rodriguez@saipantribune.com
REPORTER

Sam Joyner, coordinator of the Inaugural Interscholastic Elementary Basketball Tournament, said they will be dividing participating schools according to zones to play in an All-Star Game set for May 2 at Marianas High School Gymnasium.

Joyner said the funding for this activity is still being secured from sources.

"This will be the first time for an all-star game so the particulars are still being developed. However we will divide the schools in zones and come up with two zones such as North vs. South or East vs. West," Joyner said.

Before the all-star game, there will be the one-day tournament for the boys basketball this April 18.

The participating schools are Oleai, San Vicente, Tanapag, Kagman, Gregorio T. Camacho, and William S. Reyes elementary schools.

Oleai captured the girls crown by the beating San Vicente, 13-7, in the championship match last April 4.

Tanapag defeated Kagman, 16-7, in the battle for third place.

All six teams went to a single round



robin elimination format, which will also be the same format used in the boys tournament.

All the scores of each team in its five games in the eliminations will be totaled and the two teams with the highest accumulated scores will automatically advance to the finals and No. 3 and No. 4 will play for third place.

The main purpose of this event is to assist in the mission of developing student athletes into future leaders through the basketball program.

"Our athletic program teaches life's most important lessons to our students: sportsmanship, dedication, teamwork, respect for others, and respect for themselves," Joyner said.

Joyner said that coaches from participating teams will keep the stats of their players and fax them to him and the players for the all-star teams will be determined accordingly.

"Each team will be made up based on stats. Coaches will parlay and decide who will coach, how long, and when," he said.

Close to a hundred students are expected to play in the boys tournament, same as during the girls play two weekends ago.

All six teams went to a single round

Powerpuffs complete back-to-back title

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Saipan Tribune Sports

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Wade's career-high 55 carries Heat past Knicks

Dwyane Wade had one more argument for MVP voters: the second-best scoring show in Miami Heat history.

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SAIPAN TRIBUNE

Cabrera wins Masters in playoff



Angel Cabrera of Argentina celebrates after winning the Masters golf tournament in a sudden death playoff at the Augusta National Golf Club in Augusta, Ga., Sunday, April 12, 2009.

Maxi crushes 2 swim marks

By ROSELYN B. MONROYO
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REPORTER

Saipan SwimClub's Maxi Braig continued his record-breaking year, shattering two more 9 to 10 age group marks during

the SSC-Tsunami Swimming Center Saipan dual meet held early this month at the Kan Pacific

See MAXI on Page 26



Maxi Braig, seen here competing in the 100m freestyle during the 2009 SSC Heptathlon Meet, broke two records during the SSC-Tsunami Saipan dual meet held on April 4 and 5 at the Kan Pacific Swimming Pool in Marpi.

By DOUG FERGUSON
AP GOLF WRITER

The cheers came from every corner of Augusta National, the kind of mayhem that had been missing at the Masters. The last one was for Angel Cabrera, a most unlikely champion.

He heard the roars for Phil Mickelson and Tiger Woods, a supercharged duel that was pure theater. Cabrera never lost hope when a roar rattled the pines after Kenny Perry got within inches of an ace on the 16th hole to build a two-shot lead with two holes to play.

This is how it's supposed to be on Sunday at Augusta National. And it was.

"It's a course that you can do a lot of birdies, a lot of bogeys," Cabrera said through an interpreter. "A lot of magical things happen. It's simply the Masters."

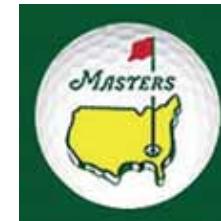
And the most magical thing of all happened just as the sun began to set.

Perry, a 48-year-old on the verge of becoming golf's oldest champion, had gone 22 consecutive holes without a bogey until he dropped shots on each

of the last two holes for a 71 to force a three-man playoff that included Chad Campbell.

Cabrera, who also shot 71, looked like the odd man out when his tee shot on the first playoff hole landed behind a Georgia pine, and his 4-iron struck another one. But he managed to scratch out a par with a sand wedge to 8 feet and a pressure-packed putt.

When luck turned against Perry on the second extra hole—a splotch of mud on his ball in the fairway that led to a



bogey—Cabrera made a routine par to become the first Argentine in a green jacket.

At No. 69 in the world, he became the lowest-ranked player to win the Masters since the world ranking began in 1986.

"This is a great moment, the dream of any golfer to win the Masters," Cabrera said during the green jacket ceremony. "I'm so emotional I can barely talk."

Ditto for the 30,000 fans who witnessed this stunning show.

"I think I lost my hearing on a few holes, they were screaming so loud," Perry said.

He also lost the tournament.

See CABRERA on Page 26

Bucher: It's not just about winning



Taga Inc. president Wolf Mojica, center, is flanked by professional triathletes, from right, Jim McConnel, Renata Bucher, Julie Dibens, and Sam Gardner just outside the DFS Galleria last Saturday afternoon. The four pro athletes are preparing for this Saturday's XTERRA Saipan Championship.

By NAZARIO RODRIGUEZ JR.
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REPORTER



Swiss pro triathlete Renata Bucher, winner of the last four XTERRA Saipan Championship, admits she always returns to Saipan not only because she keeps on winning here but because she loves the course. Bucher also said the social

XTERRA volunteers meeting today

Various events leading to the 2008 XTERRA Saipan Championship will be held this week, including a volunteers meeting set at 5:30pm today at the conference room of DFS.

Wolf Mojica of Taga, Inc.,

atmosphere makes Saipan the best place of all the races in the XTERRA Global Tour.

which is at the forefront of organizing this year's XTERRA Saipan and Tagaman Triathlon, said volunteers are needed for aid stations and other support group for the races.

The XTERRA Saipan

"This place is always safe for me," she says adding that she can go around and see people smiling all the time.

"It's nice to see them again,"

See BUCHER on Page 26